

In search of discursive anchorage sources: analysis of hiperlinks from *Estamos Juntos* collective on Telegram

Em busca das fontes de ancoragem discursiva: análise de hiperlinks do coletivo *Estamos Juntos* no Telegram

Telma Johnson

*Associate Professor at UFJF and PhD in Communication and Contemporary Sociabilities at UFMG.
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Programa de Pós-graduação em Comunicação, Juiz de Fora (MG), Brasil.*

Paulo Roberto Leal

*Full Professor at UFJF and PhD in Political Science at IUPERJ.
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Programa de Pós-graduação em Comunicação, Juiz de Fora (MG), Brasil.*

Introduction

This article analyzes 1,069 informational hyperlinks on the Telegram platform of the *Estamos Juntos* group, a collective that was organized in 2020 around the defense of life (threatened by government mismanagement in the coronavirus pandemic) and democratic order (described by sectors of the Brazilian extreme right close to Bolsonarism). In opposition to the anti-science and anti-democracy discourses present in pro-government demonstrations in early 2020 (and reiterated since then), *Estamos Juntos* was born with

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v22.ed48.2022.329>

ALCEU (Rio de Janeiro, online), V. 22, Nº 48, p.64-85, set./dez. 2022

the project of bringing together people and organizations that are ideologically diverse, but united in the defense of life, constitutional order and of the values of democracy.

The choice to analyze the hyperlinks indicated in the conversations of this group on Telegram, between June 8th and September 6th, is based on two pretensions: through the understanding of what were the resources activated in the techno-communicative interactions, where an attempt was made on one hand, to map the collective dynamics of organization of the initiative itself; while on the other hand, and mainly, to point out digital traces, through the published informational links, which could serve as “associative trails” – that is, when analyzing which sources the links referred to, it would be possible to discuss the tacit or explicit endorsement of certain institutions (to the detriment of others), as well as inferring the persuasion processes associated with these choices.

This object is, therefore, a useful instrument for revisiting the debate on the relative influences with which different actors present themselves on digital media platforms – for example, websites and portals of large communication groups, alternative digital media, etc. – in the discursive subsidy process for public debate and, consequently, for the (re)circulation of interpretations considered more legitimate by certain portions of public opinion.

Political polarization and information sources

As pointed out by Primo, “one cannot take the idea of the loss of centrality of the reference journalistic vehicles to the extreme, to the point of assuming their current lack of importance, both in terms of the selection (filtering) of events to be published and the news production” (2011, p. 138), but it is necessary to emphasize that “the interactor consumes information from several sources: professional or amateur; from renowned journals or unknown individuals; of large alternative organizations or collectives” (2011, p. 142).

In this sense, systematic evidence has been indicating that, in relation to political issues (as is the case of the group *Estamos Juntos*), there has been an increasing trend towards a decrease in the presence of content produced by traditional media as a priority source of information on networks (MONT'ALVERNE; MITOZO, 2019; RECUERO; SOARES, 2020; PIAIA; ALVES, 2020; SANTOS; CHAGAS; MARINHO, 2022).

“It can be seen that there is a predominance of social networks as the main sources of news. With WhatsApp itself among the main sources, it is clear that there is feedback from the groups with the contents produced by themselves”, as Camila Mont'Alverne and Isabele Mitozo (2019, p. 20) point out, about the 2018 electoral process. For the authors,

The concentration of content coming from YouTube also demonstrates that traditional news sources have not received as much attention as digital tools. The tendency seems to be to share partisan content, based on the aforementioned tool. (MONT'ALVERNE; MITOZO, 2019, p. 20)

In the same way, when analyzing a different topic (but also of a political nature), such as misinformation about the environment, Raquel Recuero and Felipe Bonow Soares mention the “relevance of Facebook's original content and the use of multimodality. Most of the content that circulated in the analyzed discussion came from the platform itself and was accompanied by videos or images” (2020, p. 77). Likewise, when discussing the information circulating in Bolsonaroist groups on the networks, Nina Santos, Viktor Chagas, Juliana Marinho maintain that “the minority role of traditional media as sources of information activated both directly (through their websites) and indirectly, via social media such as YouTube” (2022, p. 18).

Therefore, the present work seeks to verify if this phenomenon was repeated in the hyperlinks of the Telegram of *Estamos Juntos*. With this, more is discussed than the mere political situation in Brazil at that time or even the nature of the collective that was formed there (even if these elements are also discussed); it is about identifying where basic information came from and, from the perspective of those individuals and organizations in the process of dialogue in the fledgling group, which voices were more authorized and legitimized as sources of interpretation of reality.

The emergence of *Estamos Juntos* in the media ecosystem

The *Estamos Juntos* group is described and analyzed, from this moment on in this study, within a double empirical dimension through the use of experimental digital methods of observation, collection, organization and analysis of quali-quantitative data. In a first dimension, the group is identified as one of the initiatives that emerged in 2020 in the Brazilian scenario against an eventual democratic institutional rupture, against the background of the global health crisis, particularly aggravated in the country by the denial of the political power established in the metatopic public space (TAYLOR, 2000).

Other cases, for example, included *Somos Democracia*, which was born autonomously within the Corinthians Sport Club football crowd; the *Pacto pela Democracia*, composed of entities from different spectrums and traditions, such as Renova BR, Raps, SOS Mata Atlântica, NGO Sou da Paz, Rede Nossa São Paulo, Instituto Vladimir Herzog, Associação Brasileira de Imprensa (ABI) and Instituto Ethos; the hashtag *Somos 70 por cento*, in reference to the DataFolha survey of May 28, 2020 on those who considered the Jair Bolsonaro government as being bad, terrible or fair; the initiative of lawyers and legal experts *Basta!*.

In another, relational and communicative dimension, *Estamos Juntos* is understood as a social network with its own characteristics of structure, content and function (BOYD; ELLISON, 2007; JOHNSON, 2010; SIMMEL, 1910), influenced by indeterminations, overdeterminations and semicyclic causalities (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1996; SERRES, 1975). Thusly, we further consider that the sociotechnical network *Estamos Juntos* is driven by affordances, from Gibson's perspective (1986), that is, perceived as functional values under conditions of situational possibilities and constraints.

The exploratory phase of the study sought to capture the training and resources used by the *Estamos Juntos* network in the face of social isolation in the midst of the SARS-CoV2-19 pandemic in Brazil. This phase led to the following stages of problematization and research development, as we will discuss later in the work. The *Estamos Juntos* initiative was launched on May 30, 2020 with a full-page manifesto, published as an advertisement in print editions of Brazilian newspapers, signed by politicians, artists, intellectuals and businessmen from different political spectrums.

Under the title "We are many", the text presented the group as "a meeting of Brazilian citizens, companies, organizations and institutions", who make up the majority part which is part of those who defend "life, freedom and democracy" (SOMOS MUITOS, 2020, p. A5). The manifesto ideologically positioned the initiative as a broad supra-party front:

Left, center and right united to defend law, order, politics, ethics, families, voting, science, truth, respect and appreciation of diversity, freedom of the press, the importance of art, preservation of the environment and responsibility in the economy. (SOMOS MUITOS, 2020, p. A5)

The report highlighted, in large letters, in the lower right quadrant, the hashtag #JUNTOS, without mentioning any specific social network, and, to a lesser extent, the website www.movimentoestamosjuntos.org, created to collect signatures in support of the project. The website became a reference for the first attempts to structure the bases and actions of *Estamos Juntos* with the

publication of a list of groups created on June 1st on the instant messaging application WhatsApp, separated by the 26 Brazilian states and the Federal District, with respective hyperlinks of invitations to join the groups.

In line with our research agenda – to identify and map social movements and cognitive collective dynamics (DIANI, 2003) in their latent stages that emerged in the context of Covid-19 –, we joined 27 WhatsApp groups. Between the 1st and the 7th of June, few groups registered activities, but on the 8th of June messages began to arrive informing changes in the direction of the project. *Estamos Juntos* communicated the opening of a group that would work in a unified way in the alternative application Telegram, which has been gaining popularity in Brazil (MOGNON, 2021).

The organizers justified the substitution of applications due to the decision taken by WhatsApp, at the time, to close its groups for debates, only allowing publications by administrators. They also informed users about their surprise concerning the high number of engagements, in a short period of time, and that the project still did not have “hands” to manage so many groups. Thus, the obstacles encountered by WhatsApp's policy of limiting groups to 256 people were circumvented by Telegram's ability to host larger groups of up to 200,000 people.

With the invitation-link sent by WhatsApp, we accessed *Estamos Juntos* on Telegram on June 8, 2020, at 5:49 pm, where there were already 3,389 registered members. An administrative message, posted at 2:47 pm, dealt with the purpose, description and behavior etiquette of the new group:

Folks, we are now opening this group here for message exchange and conversation between participants. We apologize for the delay! We didn't expect to engage so many people so quickly, and we took the time to get organized.

The movement was born to bring people together in defense of life, freedom and democracy in the serious crisis facing the country. Here in this group, the goal is to exchange content, ideas and proposals precisely about this.

It is important that the debate is respectful and constructive. For this reason, we will seek to reject messages with an offensive, aggressive tone and fake news.

We want to create a Brazil that brings back the joy and pride of being Brazilian!

The intense, and often heated, discussions that took place in the following hours and days between the participants included the most diverse subjects, starting with the lack of familiarity with the use of the Telegram application. Here we list the most common ones: 1) complaints about the flood of messages received on Telegram, whose functionalities were unknown to many, making dialogue difficult; 2)

controversies for and against impeachment proceedings against President Jair Bolsonaro; 3) controversies about the resources that the group should mobilize beyond domestic pot-banging protests; 4) criticisms regarding the very open characteristic of the group, where everyone could post; 5) na impasse on the lack of direction of the group, mainly about moderation in the debates.

This exploratory phase led us to realize that the very emerging nature of *Estamos Juntos*, with uncertainties, disputes and ongoing processes, would need a methodological strategy that would make it possible to map through the resources triggered in techno-communicative interactions. Thus, understanding that ontological bases and epistemological constructs go together, we worked with the planned, non-dualist and non-essentialist perspective of the Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which assumes that nature is constituted by complex networks of relationships negotiated between human and not humans aggregates.

Since the early 1980s, the ANT has questioned traditional social theory, its focus on anthropocentrism, and asserted a place for the importance of material traversings in the social world. In the Gibsonian sense of the ability to apprehend information through the direct perception of the properties of an object or an environment, Latour (2012) goes on to argue that the ANT proposes overcoming uncertainties by adopting postures and scientific practices that understand existent means not only as intermediate supports, but as agents of mediation, meaning and transformation. As the author explains, the ANT:

It is not – the creation of an “absurd symmetry between humans and non-humans”. Obtaining symmetry, for us, means not imposing a priori any spurious asymmetry between intentional human action and the material world of causal relations. There are divisions that we must not dialectically cross, overcome, reduce. Rather, they need to be ignored and left to their own devices, like a once formidable castle now in ruins. (LATOURE, 2012, p. 114)

In this sense, we address the question of how *Estamos Juntos*, in the process of appropriating Telegram's functionalities, reveals digital traces (VENTURINI; LATOUR, 2019) on dynamics, media practices and oscillations of values. It was based on the premise that the territories of instant messaging applications are different from open social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. As Abdin (2019) states, in a systematization of global studies on the use of technologies that substitute traditional text-based Short Messaging Services (SMS), these instant services have gained popularity in Southern Cone countries, including Brazil, due to end to end encryption protocols.

The development of the research, our next item, adopts the approach of digital methods, which work with social and cultural research techniques from the specificities of online media affordances and the digital traces produced by platforms in their mediation of collective actions (VENTURINI; GRAY; BOUNEGRU; ROGERS, 2018).

In search of digital traces and associative trails of *Estamos Juntos*

The digital methods approach, introduced by Rogers (2009), is a research program that ontologically distinguishes objects, contents, devices and environments that are natively digital from those digitized and migrated to the internet. Rogers (2009, p. 8) developed the notion of *online groundedness* to propose a methodological turn “in an effort to conceptualize research which follows the medium, captures its dynamics, and makes grounded claims about cultural and societal change”.

The principle of “follow the medium”, in addition to following a large volume of data (big data), is a research strategy “for dealing with the ephemeral and unstable nature of online data” (ROGERS, 2019, p. 3), combining studies interested in how the platform affects the availability of content (medium research) and what stories the content tells as a function of platform effects (social research).

Nowadays the web is becoming a space for more than the study of on-line culture. Rather it has become a site to study a range of cultural and social issues, charting for example ‘concerns of the electorate’ from the ‘searches they conduct’, and the ‘spread of arguments... about political and other issues’, among other questions concerning society at large [...]. Of course, it also remains a site to study online culture and undertake medium research. Digital methods are approaches to studying both, a point I return to when taking up the question of whether one can remove medium artefacts (such as manipulated search engine results or bots) and have a purified subject of study. (ROGERS, 2019, p. 4)

The data collection stage for tracking natively digital objects (ROGERS, 2019) in the structure of Telegram and the grammatization of the action (D'ANDRÉA, 2020) by *Estamos Juntos* was carried out for 13 weeks, totaling 91 days, adapted from the calendar of epidemiological notification for the year 2020, covering the period from June 8 to September 6. By international convention, epidemiological weeks are counted from Sunday to Saturday. In this study, we adapted for weeks from Monday to Sunday, according to the launch date of the group on Telegram, which occurred on a Monday.

Unlike WhatsApp, Telegram is a cloud-based fast messaging service that allows you to access your groups and channels simultaneously across multiple devices. Channels are tools for broadcasting messages to large audiences and have an unlimited number of subscribers, but only the administrator can publish

messages. In groups, everyone can publish. These resources enabled daily monitoring of the *Estamos Juntos* group through the application, using a Samsung S9 smartphone device, and systematic operations of extracting synchronized data through Telegram Desktop for Windows x64.

The web version allows you to export and store photos, videos, voice and video messages, stickers, animated gifs and various types of files (doc, zip, mp3, etc.) on your computer, in html and json formats, for viewing in browsers, including offline. On September 6, when the collection ended after the last post at 23:49, the tool registered a total of 2,981 members in *Estamos Juntos* (12.04% less than on June 8), 1,033 shared hyperlinks, 460 photos, 91 voice messages, 83 videos and 35 files.

Finding a high incidence of shared hyperlinks led us to develop a raw database with relational attributes separated into five categories:

1) who posted - This category was initially included to enable a construct based on the relational model. The individual identifications of the posts were anonymized, in later stages of the work, as they were not of interest or scope of this research.

2) date/time of posting;

3) post text;

4) hyperlink extracted from post; and

5) subject of the hyperlink - The files extracted from Telegram Desktop, after conversion from html to csv format, underwent selection and organization processes with the help of Notepad++ text editors and Excel spreadsheet, followed by manual curation techniques.

When checking the 1,033 automatically captured hyperlinks, we noticed a set of 43 references that we classified as false positives. These were electronic addresses (Uniform Resource Locators, URLs): 1) broken, which pointed to subjects different from those indicated in the texts of the posts; 2) nonexistent, known in the web environment as “Error 404”; 3) with advertising content; or 4) for voluntary participation in scientific research involving human subjects. These cases, as they were considered “noise” for the purposes of the research, were discarded.

The development of the base also required identifying, in the messages, hyperlinks in the form of hypertexts (highlighted intertextual elements with embedded links for instant connections) not detected via the Notepad++ software location resources by the keywords of network protocols “http” or “https” or the path “www”, to make them visible and subject to analysis by the attributes of categories 4 and 5 (mentioned above). The construction of these categories also involved reversing all links posted with the aid of URL shortening tools. There were also records of hyperlinks posted as isolated objects, that is, without adding contextual content.

These filtering, trimming and insertion procedures resulted in a corpus of 1,069 informational hyperlinks as units of analysis. Hanada (2013, p. XIV), when differentiating the use of informational and navigational links, explains that the former refer “to other pages that are considered important for users to consult, due to their content”. Navigational links (HANADA, 2013), created so that users can shorten access between sections of the same website, are features available in the Telegram structure, but they are not the focus of our work.

By synthesizing a long tradition of uses and continuous morphological transformations of hyperlinks in digital media convergence, Turow (2008) revisits the usefulness of the notion proposed by Vannevar Bush, in the 1940s, of intertextual links as “associative trails”. The author states that instantaneous digital hyperlinks, like associative trails that function as “basic forces” that name and prioritize certain ideas and actors while silencing others, “affect the size and general shape of the public sphere” (TUROW, 2008, p. 4).

As the author argues:

Any discussion of how to promote a healthy society offline as well as online must therefore pay close attention to links. The aim should be to facilitate the widest possible sharing of varied, reliably sourced information in order to encourage specialized groups and society as a whole to confront their past and present in relation to the future. With a cornucopia of new media technologies and millions of web sites and blogs, it would be easy to assume this goal is imminent. Yet a wide range of critics has lamented that this is not in fact the case. Some claim that both mainstream and nonestablishment sectors of the digital media target people who already agree with them, by producing content that reinforces, rather than challenges, their shared points of view. (TUROW, 2008, p. 4)

In this conception, Halavais (2008) argues that, in addition to defining digital hyperlinks as forms of automated citation of sources, it is necessary to understand their nature, uses and social implications in context, since their meanings are neither universal nor permanent. Comparing with the history of source

citations in the academic world, Halavais (2008) suggests that digital hyperlinking practices are not only forms of endorsing or recognizing sources, but also of criticism, analysis, contextualization and persuasion.

To map the associative trails of the *Estamos Juntos* group, we exported part of our database into the Gephi software to initially create a binary network structured by representative nodes of shared hyperlinks and actors responsible for the shares. All hyperlinks were given labels, based on their hosting and domain information. From the Social Network Analysis (ARS), based on the statistics and distribution algorithms of the original network, we created a second network, this time based only on URLs and their labels, for a more specific analysis of frequencies on types of platforms, information sources and thematic contents with the use of content analysis techniques and co-occurrences (BARDIN, 2022) carried out manually, for semantic comparative inferences.

Findings and analyzes

In general terms, *Estamos Juntos* presented three peaks of valid link shares in the data collection period. The first and highest peak occurred between the 8th and 14th of June, 2020, the first week of operation on Telegram, when 178 links were shared. The second peak, with 126 links, was in the third week (June 22-28). These shares were identified as spontaneous. On the last peak (August 31-September 6), the group already had a team of volunteers responsible for creating news clippings, having shared 71 of the 118 links in the period (60%). The clippings began to be distributed in the group on August 17th, via .pdf files, but became clippings with direct hyperlinks from August 25th on. In both cases there was no determined periodicity.

The first general representation of the *Estamos Juntos* network is a binary structure formed by 1,238 nodes – involving shared links and actors responsible for sharing – with 1,069 edges that connect these nodes. The first statistic we applied was the Average Degree, to identify the number of edges that affect the nodes, degrees of entry and exit, directional flows, and nodes with greater and lesser numbers of connections. Then, we applied the Network Diameter statistic, which indicates the distance from a starting node to the most distant node, based on the principle of centrality – the point in the network that concentrates the greatest number of resources, functions and competences (BRANDES, 2001). Based on this principle, it is possible to identify central, intermediate and peripheral actors.

The size of the network has a diameter with index 1, with an average degree of 0,863 edges among the 1,238 nodes, which means a level of direct proximity between the nodes. The edges represent citations to the 1,069 unidirectional links made by users, since by Telegram's architecture the connections do not require acceptance or knowledge of the referenced, making it possible to form non-reciprocal associative trails. The metrics of the degrees of activity of the 1,069 nodes, based on the number of adjacent lines, show that 957 of them (89.52% of the total) had a degree 1, as they received a single citation. This phenomenon, called trail in network analysis because it is a path that only occurs once (WASSERMAN; FAUST, 1994), is verified by the very high rate of different categories and files indexed to the root domains.

Figure 1 presents an overview of the network. For its construction, we used the ForceAtlas 2 algorithm, a directed force layout that simulates a physical system of attraction and repulsion. Then we applied, in this order, the Contraction, Non Overlap and Adjust Labels algorithms, in addition to filters for a cleaner visual representation. To enable a productive identification in this analytical step, all nodes related to the links received labels created from variations of information present in their URLs.

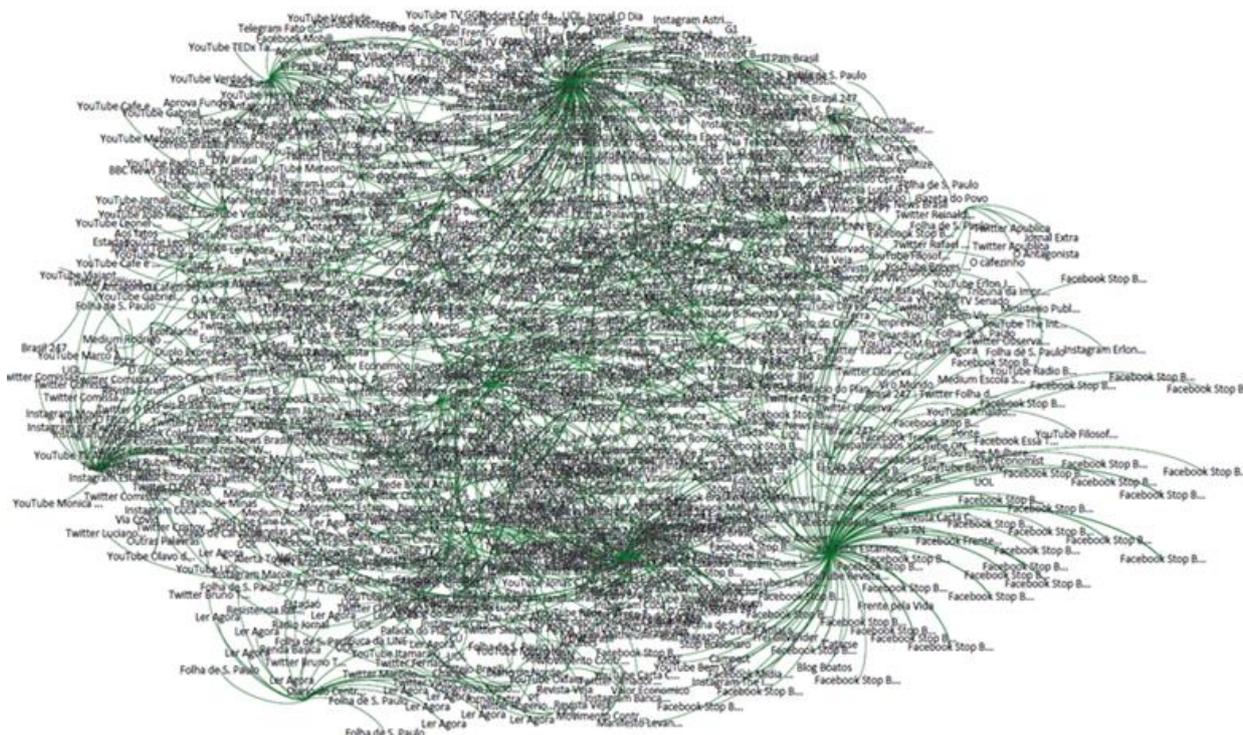


FIGURE 1: General graph with statistics Average Grade and Diameter of the Estamos Juntos network

Source: Autonomous elaboration with the aid of Gephi software.

One of the factors that draws attention in the graph in Figure 1 is that, although the group started with 3,389 members on June 8 and suffered a small reduction of 12% by the end of data collection, sharing

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v22.ed48.2022.329>

links is a practice of few actors. The data show that among 169 users who share links to various digital environments, only 15 of them accounted for 54.63% of the total of 1,069 shared links, including the pre- and post-creation phases of the news clippings team. The graph, therefore, presents a decentralized and scattered reticular structure, due to the many link trails, at the same time demarcated by degrees of out-links of user nodes with a high concentration of connections (green color).

Based on the degrees of activity of the nodes that indicated high dispersion in the information circulation, we calculated the distribution of frequencies by types of platforms that emerged from the 1,069 information units already labeled, excluding indexers and file loading identifiers in browsers. Outbound links from the network were classified by general media categories based on the universe of websites and social media. As we show below (Table 1), website leads represent a little more than twice that of all the social media sites combined.

Platform type	Number of outgoing links	% of the total
Websites	725	67.82
YouTube	133	12.44
Twitter	100	9.35
Facebook	60	5.61
Instagram	30	2.81
Medium	10	0.94
Telegram	06	0.56
WhatsApp	04	0.38
LinkedIn	01	0.09
Total	1,069	100.00

TABLE 1: *Distribution of link frequencies by network media platforms*

Source: Produced by the authors.

Based on these data, we decided to analyze the co-occurrence between websites and the trails left by the plurality of categories and files linked to their root domains, as mentioned earlier. Our purpose was to understand which sources of information the network is associated with and to what extent the apparent plurality translates into diversity considering that the *Estamos Juntos* project emerged in the public space, positioning itself as a broad democratic and supra-party front.

The co-occurrence metrics, with their distribution frequencies and dynamics of the website groupings from the original network that we designed, were obtained with the Gephi Modularity algorithm, which showed us an index of 0.989 of weight distribution in classes of clusters that totaled 484 communities. As we illustrate in Figure 2, the most expressive groupings in number of references, based on root domains, are larger in size and red in color in the heat map.

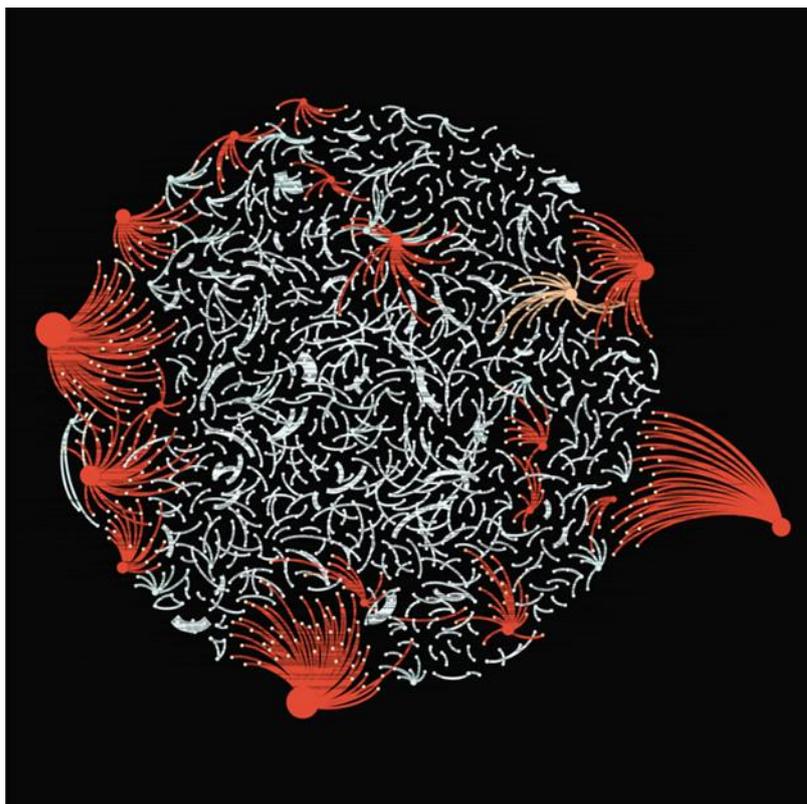


FIGURE 2: *Grouping of website domains on the Estamos Juntos network*

Source: Autonomous elaboration with the aid of Gephi software.

The evidence extracted from the content analysis of the largest groups indicates a media menu with a predominance of information sources associated with major Brazilian press vehicles - characterized by the tradition of business concentration and ideological convergence to the right (JOHNSON; LEAL, 2019). In an overview, as shown in Table 2, the content portal UOL and the newspaper Folha de S. Paulo, which belong to the same media conglomerate Grupo Folha, head the list of trails that received the highest number of references on the network. Next come the G1 news portal and the newspapers O Globo and Valor Econômico, from Grupo Globo, the largest media conglomerate in Latin America.

A second type of grouping that we noticed is made up of alternative press vehicles found in different ideological spectrums. This is the case of sites on the left, Ler Agora, Diário do Centro do Mundo, Brasil 247, Portal Fórum and the news agency The Intercept Brasil, with Poder 360 converging to the center and O Antagonista and Agência MBrasil on the right. Despite the low representation, two sites in this group are recognized for doing investigative journalism. Poder 360 is part of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), having participated in the Panama Papers, Bahama Leaks and Paradise Papers, and The Intercept Brasil more recently brought the Brazilian scandal “Vaza Jato” to light, about leaked conversations on Telegram between former judge Sérgio Moro and members of the Operation Car Wash (“Lava Jato”) task force.

Table 2, which conveys the results of the 21 most referenced websites on the network with its 362 trails (54.76% of the total 725 links), shows that there is still a third type of grouping, representing international journalistic operations that operate in the Brazilian scenario with more diversified and independent digital products in Portuguese. This is the case of the websites: BBC News Brasil (United Kingdom), El País Brasil (Spain), DW Brasil (Germany) and CNN Brasil (United States). In the general set of 725 websites, there were sporadic records of segmented, propositional and collaborative alternative journalistic vehicles.

Domains	Number of references
1. Portal UOL	55
2. Folha de S. Paulo	51
3. Ler Agora	30
4. Portal G1	28
5. Brasil 247	27
6. O Antagonista	21
7. BBC News Brasil	20
8. O Globo	17
9. El País Brasil	15
10. Diário do Centro do Mundo	15
11. Portal Fórum	11
12. O Estado de S. Paulo	10

13. Valor Econômico	08
14. Correio Brasiliense	08
15. DW Brasil	08
16. Poder 360	07
17. Revista Veja	07
18. Agência MBrasil	06
19. CNN Brasil	06
20. Estado de Minas	06
21. The Intercept Brasil	06

TABLE 2: *The 21 journalistic domains most referenced by the Estamos Juntos network**

(*) After the 21 domains, the frequency distribution decreases from 5 to 1

Source: Elaboration by the authors.

With these results we extricated, from our originally created database (category 5), the subjects of the total links of the UOL portal and Folha de S. Paulo for a comparative analysis of the contents in a semantic dimension. The categories were constructed from the frequent co-occurrence of words in headlines and journalistic texts, as summarized in Figure 3. A common point in both vehicles is the emphasis on political issues related to the Bolsonaro government (and family) intersected within the Covid-19 pandemic context – in the case of UOL, 39 out of 55 links (70.9%) and Folha, 41 out of 51 links (80.39%). One difference, however, is that on Folha 72.54% of all links are based on informative journalism, while on UOL the relationship between informative journalism (52%) and opinion journalism (47%) is much closer.



FIGURE 3: Cloud of frequent words by subjects on UOL and Folha hyperlinks

Source: Elaboration by the authors.

Below, we present examples of thematic content from UOL and Folha (free translation):

- 1) **UOL (News):** “Woman among supporters cites deaths and says Bolsonaro ‘betrayed the population’”/“Mulher entre apoiadores cita mortes e diz que Bolsonaro ‘traiu a população’” (06/10/2020)

<https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2020/06/10/mulher-cobra-bolsonaro-em-conversa-com-apoiadores-e-diz-que-ele-traiu-nacao.htm>

- 2) **UOL (Rubens Valente’s column):** “Secret government action targets anti-fascist professors and police officers”/“Ação sigilosa do governo mira professores e policiais antifascistas” (07/29/2020).

<https://noticias.uol.com.br/colunas/rubens-valente/2020/07/24/ministerio-justica-governo-bolsonaro-antifascistas.htm>

- 3) **Folha (News):** “Bolsonaro’s impeachment is to potentialize a crisis, says Bruno Araújo, national president of the PSDB – Tucano says that the party will be the opposition to the president and that

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v22.ed48.2022.329>

he does not want to fork over a 'primed candidate' in 2022"/"Impeachment de Bolsonaro é potencializar uma crise, diz Bruno Araújo, presidente nacional do PSDB – Tucano diz que partido será oposição ao presidente e que não quer entregar 'candidato pronto' em 2022" (06/13/2020).

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/amp/poder/2020/06/impeachment-de-bolsonaro-e-potencializar-uma-crise-diz-bruno-araujo-presidente-nacional-do-psdb.shtml>

4) Folha (**Editorial**): "Jair Rousseff - Breaking the debt ceiling would be to guarantee a future crisis in which the poor and the president would both lose"/"Jair Rousseff - Quebra do teto seria contratar crise futura em que pobres e presidente perderiam" (08/22/2020).

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaio/2020/08/jair-rousseff.shtml?origin=folha>

Final considerations

An important feature verified in the analyzed corpus of the *Estamos Juntos* group is that its value structure is strongly supported by themes and information shaped by the mainstream press. Although the temporal speed of a complex media ecosystem was striking, the discussion in the group showed little visibility for alternative voices.

That is, contrary to what has already been found in numerous studies on contemporary political issues (in the sense of a significant decrease in the circulation, in the digital environment, of content produced by traditional communication companies, with the addition of material produced by the political field in question), the present analysis indicates that this phenomenon did not manifest itself in the *Estamos Juntos* group.

The study demonstrates that the associative trails mobilized were scarcely polyphonic and pulverized. Even if it cannot be said that there is necessarily (and always) convergence between the agendas of the press and of *Estamos Juntos*, it is largely in the narrative produced by the traditional groups of the Brazilian media that anchored the conversations (re)produced by the group.

Thus, it is revealed that, even in a potentially plural collective and in the face of a context underlined by the overlapping of pandemic, political and governance crises in the current Brazilian scenario (in theory stimulating a discursive environment marked by diversity and the multiplicity of valuations), there was correlation between media agendas and the discussion of political issues in that group.

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v22.ed48.2022.329>

This finding points to the need for challenging studies based on empirical analyzes of the discourse concerning the downfall of traditional media, in regard to the emergence of the digital world, which does not always find echoes in the evidence. Symbiosis, more than substitution, is perhaps the key word to designate the complexity of the current media ecosystem – which demands expansion of future research efforts based on this conceptual assumption.

Telma Johnson

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7561-9794>

Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Programa de Pós-graduação em Comunicação, Juiz de Fora (MG), Brasil

PhD in Communication and Contemporary Sensibilities at UFMG

E-mail: telma.johnson@ufjf.br

Paulo Roberto Leal

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9935-1614>

Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Programa de Pós-graduação em Comunicação, Juiz de Fora (MG), Brasil

PhD in Political Science at IUPERJ

E-mail: pabeto.figueira@uol.com.br

Received on: November 25, 2022.

Approved on: December 9, 2022.

References:

ABDIN, Latifa. **Bots and Fake News**: the role of WhatsApp in the 2018 Brazilian presidential election. Intersections Cross-sections 2019 Graduate Conference. Toronto, 2019.

BARDIN, Laurence. **Análise de conteúdo**. Lisboa: Edições 90, 2022.

BOYD, Danah; Ellison, Nicole. Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship. **Journal of computer-mediated communication**, v.13, n.1, p. 210-230, 2007.

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v22.ed48.2022.329>

ALCEU (Rio de Janeiro, online), V. 22, Nº 48, p.64-85, set./dez. 2022

BRANDES, Ulrik. Faster algorithm for betweenness centrality. **Journal of Mathematical Sociology**, v.25, n.2, p. 163-177, 2001.

D'ANDRÉA, Carlos. **Pesquisando plataformas online**: conceitos e métodos. Salvador: EDUFBA, 2020.

DELEUZE, Gilles; GUATTARI, Felix. **Mil platôs**: Capitalismo e esquizofrenia - Vol. 1. Rio de Janeiro: 34, 1995.

DIANI, Mario. Networks and social movements: A research programme. In: _____. **Social movements and networks: Relational approaches to collective action**. Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003. p. 299-319.

GIBSON, James. **The ecological approach to visual perception**. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1986.

HALAVAIS, Alexander. The hyperlink as organizing principle. In: _____. **The hyperlinked society**. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008. p. 39-55. Disponível em: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv65sxn0.6>. Acesso em: 06 set. 2020.

HANADA, Raíza Sarkis. (2013). **Métricas de análises de links e qualidade de conteúdo**: um estudo de caso na Wikipédia. 2013. Dissertação (Mestrado) – Instituto de Ciências Matemáticas e de Computação, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2013.

JOHNSON, Telma. **Nos bastidores da Wikipédia Lusófona**: percalços e conquistas de um projeto de escrita coletiva on-line. Rio de Janeiro: E-papers, 2010.

JOHNSON, Telma; LEAL, Paulo. O jornalismo da edição brasileira do El País no contexto da oligopolização midiática: dissonâncias entre percepção do público e autopoicionamento. **Líbero**, n.43, p. 14-28, jan./jun. 2019.

LATOUR, Bruno. **Reagregando o social**: uma introdução à teoria do Ator-Rede. Salvador: EDUFBA, 2012.

MOGNON, Mateus. (5 de março de 2021). Telegram cresce no Brasil e já está em 45% dos celulares no país. Tecmundo. **Tecmundo**, 5 mar 2021. Disponível em: <https://www.tecmundo.com.br/software/212212-telegram-cresce-brasil-45-celulares-no-pais.htm>. Acesso em: 20 dez. 2021.

MONT'ALVERNE, Camila; MITOZO, Isabele. Muito além da mamadeira erótica: As notícias compartilhadas nas redes de apoio a presidenciáveis em grupos de WhatsApp, nas eleições brasileiras de 2018. In: VIII Congresso da Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Comunicação e Política – Compolítica, 2019, Brasília. **Anais...** Brasília: Universidade de Brasília (UnB), 2019. Disponível em: http://compolitica.org/novo/anais/2019_gt4_Montalverne.pdf. Acesso em: 15 fev. 2023.

PIAIA, Victor; ALVES, Marcelo. Abrindo a caixa preta: análise exploratória da rede bolsonarista no WhatsApp. **Intercom – RBCC**, v.43, n.3, p. 135-154, set./dez. 2020.

PRIMO, Alex. Transformações no jornalismo em rede: sobre pessoas comuns, jornalistas e organizações; blogs, Twitter, Facebook e Flipboard. **Intexto**, v.02, n.25, p. 130-146, dez. 2011.

RECUERO, Raquel; SOARES, Felipe B. A desinformação sobre meio ambiente no Facebook: o caso das queimadas no Pantanal Brasileiro. **Journal of Digital Media & Interaction**, v.3, n.8, p. 64-80, 2020. Disponível em: <https://proa.ua.pt/index.php/jdmi/article/view/21243/17196> . Acesso em: 15 fev. 2023.

ROGERS, Richard. **Doing digital methods**. London: SAGE, 2019. Edição Kindle.

_____. **The end of the virtual: digital methods**. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009.

SANTOS, Nina; CHAGAS, Viktor; MARINHO, Juliana. De onde vem a informação que circula em grupos bolsonaristas no WhatsApp. **Intexto**, n.53, e-123603, 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.19132/1807-8583202253.123603>.

SERRES, Michel. **Hermes I: La communication**. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1975.

SIMMEL, Georg. How is society possible? In: _____. **George Simmel: On individuality and social forms – selected writings**. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971. p. 6-22.

SOMOS MUITOS. **Folha de S. Paulo**, São Paulo, p. A5, 30 maio 2020.

TAYLOR, Charles. **Argumentos Filosóficos**. São Paulo: Loyola, 2000.

TUROW, Joseph. Introduction: On not taking the hyperlink for granted. In: _____. **The hyperlinked society**. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008, p. 1-18. Disponível em: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv65sxn0.3>. Acesso em: 06 set. 2020.

VENTURINI, Tommaso; LATOUR, Bruno. O tecido social: rastros digitais e métodos quali-quantitativos. In: _____. **Métodos digitais: teoria-prática-crítica**. Lisboa: ICNOVA, 2019. p. 37-46.

VENTURINI, Tommaso; GRAY, Jonathan; BOUNEGRU, Liliana; ROGERS, Richard. A reality check(list) for digital methods. **New Media & Society**, v.20, n.11, p. 4195-4217, nov. 2018.

WASSERMAN, Stanley; FAUST, Katherine. **Social network analysis: Methods and applications**. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Abstract

The article analyzes the hyperlinks published on the Telegram platform by the *Estamos Juntos* group – a Brazilian collective created in 2020 to combat anti-science and anti-democracy discourses mobilized by the far right in street demonstrations and on social networks. Based on methods of observation, collection, organization and interpretation of digital data, in a quali-quantitative perspective, the research analyzed 1,069 hyperlinks between June 8 and September 6, 2020, to identify digital traces and associative trails that indicated which sources the members of *Estamos Juntos* used to guide their debates. It was found that the narratives produced by traditional groups in the Brazilian media anchored the majority of the information that circulated within the group, dedicating little space to alternative sources.

Keywords: Media Ecosystem. Digital Platforms. Informational Links.

Resumo

O artigo efetua análise dos hiperlinks publicados na plataforma Telegram pelo grupo *Estamos Juntos* – coletivo brasileiro criado em 2020 para combater os discursos anticiência e antidemocracia mobilizados pela extrema-direita em manifestações de rua e nas redes sociais. Com base em métodos de observação, coleta, organização e interpretação de dados digitais, em perspectiva quali-quantitativa, a pesquisa analisou 1.069 hiperlinks entre 8 de junho e 6 de setembro de 2020, para

identificar rastros digitais e trilhas associativas que indicassem a quais fontes os membros do Estamos Juntos recorriam para orientar seus debates. Constatou-se que as narrativas produzidas pelos grupos tradicionais da mídia brasileira ancoraram majoritariamente as informações que circularam pelo grupo, dedicando-se pouco espaço a fontes alternativas.

Palavras-chave: Ecosistema Midiático. Plataformas Digitais. Links Informativos.

Resumen

El artículo analiza los hiperlinks publicados en la plataforma Telegram por el grupo *Estamos Juntos* – un colectivo brasileño creado en 2020 para combatir los discursos anticientíficos y antidemocráticos movilizadas por la extrema derecha en manifestaciones callejeras y en las redes sociales. Con base en métodos de observación, recolección, organización e interpretación de datos digitales, en una perspectiva cuali-cuantitativa, la investigación analizó 1.069 hiperlinks entre el 8 de junio y el 6 de septiembre de 2020, para identificar rastros digitales y sendas asociativas que indicaran de qué fuentes los integrantes de Estamos Juntos recurrió a orientar sus debates. Se encontró que las narrativas producidas por grupos tradicionales en los medios brasileños anclaban majoritariamente la información que circulaba por el grupo, dedicándole poco espacio a fuentes alternativas.

Palabras clave: Ecosistema de Medios. Plataformas Digitales. Links informativos.

Este artigo é publicado em acesso aberto (Open Access) sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial (CC-BY-NC 4.0), que permite que outros remixem, adaptem e criem a partir do seu trabalho para fins não comerciais, e embora os novos trabalhos tenham de lhe atribuir o devido crédito e não possam ser usados para fins comerciais, os usuários não têm de licenciar esses trabalhos derivados sob os mesmos termos.