



“HOW DO YOU GET INFORMATION, DEPUTY?” PATTERNS OF MEDIA USE BY DEPUTIES OF THE STATE OF PARANÁ¹

Andressa Buttore Kniess²
Mylena Peixoto de Mattos³
Pedro Henrique Leite⁴
Francisco Paulo Jamil Marques⁵

Abstract: This article has three main objectives: to investigate which journalistic institutions are most used by representatives to consume information; verify the degree of confidence that representatives have in the media; and to examine the degree of efficiency that deputies attribute to different media platforms regarding self-promotion; based on the results of a face-to-face survey applied to the deputies who held office in the Legislative Assembly of Paraná (ALEP) in 2016. The forms of use and variations of trust in the media are studied considering political and personal independent variables. We found out that deputies prefer a local journalistic institution to get information; in addition, they tend to consider digital social networks as very efficient for political promotion.

Keywords: Communication; Representation; Politics; Members of Parliament; Survey.

INTRODUCTION

Research focusing on parliamentary media is not necessarily new. Coleman (1999), for example, had already reinforced for almost two decades the idea that digital communication resources would have different effects on political representation. Bennett (2003), in turn, highlighted the role of new media in reducing costs in terms of information gathering and communication between the civil sphere and political actors. Goldbeck *et al.* (2010), as well as Lilleker and Jackson (2009), focus specifically on the use of digital social networks by

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² Master in Political Science from the Federal University of Paraná. Doctorate student in Political Science by the same institution. Member of the Research Group on Communication, Politics and Technology – PONTE scholarship holder. CAPES. E-mail: andressakniess@gmail.com

³ Master in Political Science from the Federal University of Paraná. E-mail: mylenamattos.2@gmail.com

⁴ Graduated in Political Science at the Bachelor of Social Sciences at the Federal University of Paraná. Member of the Research Group on Communication, Politics and Technology - PONTE. E-mail: pedrohenri.leite@gmail.com

⁵ Professor and Researcher at the Federal University of Paraná. CNPq (National Counsel of Technological and Scientific Development) Research Productivity Scholarship. Member of the managing Committee of the National Institute of Science and Technology in Digital Democracy (Portuguese acronym: INCT.DD). Leader of the Research Group on Communication, Politics and Technology - PONTE. E-mail: marquesjamil@gmail.com

congressional representatives. In the Brazilian case, Marques *et al.* (2014) investigated the personal and political variables most strongly associated with the use of Twitter by federal deputies. It is noteworthy, however, that investigations examining the ways in which representatives appropriate media platforms for information purposes are still rare.

One of the few endeavors in this regard refers to the survey “Mídia e Política (Media and Politics)”, prepared since 2008 by FSB Comunicação. This report focuses on “assessing how decision makers in the national legislature inform themselves” (FSB COMUNICAÇÕES, 2016, p. 5). The most recent survey of the agency elaborates a diagnosis about sources of information, favorite journalistic institutions and opinions of federal representatives about the trust and influence of the media. However, a regional study on the issue is lacking, which is also willing to verify the assessment of representatives about the efficiency of the media to promote their images.

To fill this gap in the Brazilian literature, the following research problems are proposed in this article: 1) From a perspective that privileges the modes of consumption of political information, through which journalistic companies do the elected representatives claim to inform themselves? 2) What communication platforms do they say they trust the most to acquire information? 3) What are considered the most efficient communication tools (with regard to self-promotion) by those holding elective terms of office? These questions are presented in different subsections and related in the discussion of the results. The focus of the study is the state deputies of Paraná with term of office during the months of May and June 2016. Through surveys applied together with the deputies themselves the data were obtained.

The article has four parts. First, there is the presentation of the literature review. Then the text clarifies hypotheses and methodological strategies. The third part concerns the presentation of the data, focusing on the results regarding (a) how deputies inform themselves; (b) how they assess the reliability that they have on media platforms; and (c) which platforms they find most effective for their political self-promotion. Finally, we present the discussion of the results and the conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW: CONSUMPTION AND EMPLOYMENT OF MEDIA BY POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES

The discussion about the consumption of information by agents of the political field goes back to the 1970s and 1980s (BIMBER, 1991), when a set of research was dedicated to investigate the influence of different data sources on the process of producing the political decision.

Bradley (1980) points out that the need for studies in this area arose from the realization that the issues debated within the parliament were increasingly more technical and complex ones, requiring institutional responses, such as the expansion of the legislative analysts' framework and the deepening of the use of computerized systems. The author conducted a survey with Nevada state legislators that mapped the following sources of information: public hearings in committees; lectures and forums; information from federal agencies; plenary debates; reports prepared by legislative analysts; multilateral organizations and interest groups; university professors and researchers; libraries; knowledge of the subject; and, of course, information obtained from what is elaborated by the mass media institutions, such as print newspapers.

The attempt to understand which of these sources of information the representatives privilege (and why they are) also concerns to these studies. Bradley himself (1980) concludes that Committee hearings collaborate to measure the costs of implementing a particular alternative; already considering what civil society organizations say allows us to understand claims that might not be on the horizon of discussion by state actors (ZWEIR, 1979). O'Reilly (1982) analyzes the extent to which sources of information perceived as being of higher quality are most commonly triggered.

Even though privileging certain sources of information may be associated with the political decision that representatives make, there is not necessarily a relationship of determination.

Recent works, such as the study by Orton, Marcella and Baxter (2000), on United Kingdom representatives, highlight the importance of formal and informal sources of data, as well as the importance of advisers. Another concern of these same researchers is the effects of the digital communication environment on the repertoire dominated by representatives.

In this article, the idea is to verify specifically the use of media platforms as not only sources of information, but also to what extent agents say they trust them and which they consider most relevant for a favorable configuration of media of their public images.

Therefore, by being mindful of the idea of a permanent campaign (COOK, 2002; ORNSTEIN; MANN, 2000; MCNAIR, 2016), political actors are constantly concerned with employing a variety of communication tools to build a public image that is favorable to them. Authors such as Rubim (2004) and Dias (2013) point out that, throughout the twentieth century, mass communication platforms began to play a unique role in disputes that encompass large numbers of voters, demanding from candidates discursive adaptations. In this sense, there is a pressure on the representatives to obtain literacy to elaborate messages according to the grammar appropriate to the typical audience of each communication medium (FARRELL, 1998; MAAREK, 2008).

It is because of such practices that a significant portion of researchers in the field of Communication and Political Science have drawn attention to concepts such as “audience democracy” (MANIN, 1997) or “mediatization” (STRÖMBACK, 2008; ELMELUND-PRÆSTEKÆR *et al.*, 2011). Such concepts imply considering the media as political agents capable of influencing both the formation of collectively shared images and what is behind the scenes visible to the public. Moreover, the idea of “personalization of politics” is established as a tendency in different contemporary democratic regimes (BRAGA; BECHER, 2012; VAN AELST *et al.*, 2012; SCAMMELL, 2016), according to which the political agent himself seeks to become the center of visibility to the detriment of traditional institutions (such as parties).

However, it is argued that the Brazilian literature is still scarce with regard to a panorama aimed at identifying the extent to which political actors consume and trust the institutions of communication; there are also few studies on the ways in which elected officials assess the effectiveness of the media with regard to self-promotion. Adopting such a perspective with a focus on regional communication is even rarer.

For example, it is known that the kind of relationship that the political agent maintains with the electorate, as well as the position held by the representative, influence the ways in which media platforms are adopted. A campaign for an alderman whose electoral base is a neighborhood in which there are low-income residents may, perhaps (since income is not the only factor influencing the voting decision, according to Figueiredo (2008)), demands greater investment in a campaign made personally to the detriment of the use of online communication (MARQUES and MONT’ALVERNE, 2016; HERMAN, 2017). That is, the tools used in electoral campaigns need to be consistent with the profile of the public and the region that the candidate seeks to reach.

It is on this type of individual approach that representatives give to communication that lacks empirical research. It involves, among other techniques, the application of a survey. To cope with this challenge, the first dimension of this work deals with the consumption of information through different journalistic companies. According to the Media and Politics survey (FSB COMUNICAÇÕES, 2016), among federal representatives the main sources of information are newspapers and the internet, especially their favorite journalistic institutions: *Folha de S. Paulo* and *O Estado de S. Paulo (Estadão)*. When asked which newspapers they read, 89% say they read *Folha de S. Paulo* and 75% say they read local newspapers in their area. *Estadão* is in third place, with 74% of answers.

The second dimension analyzed here refers to the confidence of the representatives interviewed in different media platforms. As is well known, there is great distrust of citizens regarding the truth of the content conveyed by the media. According to Gomes (2016), the

explanation of Journalism's sense of bias may not only relate to journalistic companies, but also to the characteristics of those who read them. For Gunther (2015), the hostile media effect finds a ground that is more fertile in electoral periods and individuals with a partisan profile. Turcotte, *et al* (2015) indicate that in recent decades, audiences would have become less aware of mainstream news and there would be a steady decline in public confidence in news institutions.

In Brazil, according to the 2015 Brazilian Media Survey, 18% of respondents always said they relied on newspaper news, while 15% favored radio news, 17% relied on TV news, 11% on magazine news, and only 5% in news from social networks. Another 5% say they never trust newspapers and 20% say they never trust social networks. According to the Media and Politics Survey (FSB COMUNICAÇÕES, 2016), 70% of national representatives rely on newspaper reports, 60% rely on radio and TV news, and only 19% and 18% rely on news on Twitter and Facebook, respectively.

The third dimension of this work refers to the opinion of representatives about the efficiency of the media for their political self-promotion, being noticeable the highlight that the literature gives to digital media platforms (ENLI and SKOGERBØ, 2013). Cervi *et al.* (2011) argue that, compared to the “traditional” media, the internet, as a medium for information and communication, has become a favorable space for closer ties between political agents, opinion leaders, activists and the electorate, generally. However, it must be considered that this wide visibility made possible by digital communication is not always advantageous, since the messages broadcast by this means may arrive decontextualized and, consequently, be misinterpreted by the receivers (STROMER-GALLEY, 2000; MARQUES *et al.*, 2014). Nonetheless, the social networks of the Internet still stand out as a resource for self-promotion of the image of politicians (MARQUES *et al.*, 2014).

HYPOTHESES AND METHODOLOGY

The following hypotheses were elaborated, in line with the three study dimensions considered here: (a) consumption habits; (b) the trust attributed to the media by agents of the Legislative Branch; and (c) the degree of efficiency that deputies give to different media platforms for political self-promotion.

Hypothesis 1) Since deputies are interested in reaching a regional audience, most of them tend to follow coverage by local and state newspapers.

Given the concept of permanent campaign, already mentioned above, it is plausible the idea that state representatives are more attentive to journalistic coverage by local and state

newspapers to follow the news and the construction of their public images. In addition, the results analyzed here are expected to be consistent with data from the Media and Politics survey conducted by FSB COMUNICAÇÕES (2016), which points out that 75% of federal representatives report reading local newspapers in their region.

Hypothesis 2) Representatives' reliability in different media platforms as sources of information varies according to each deputy's personal and political profile - age, gender, educational level, number of legislatures in the ALEP, and ideological position of the party.

Based on the 2015 Brazilian Media Survey, which points to variations in Brazilians' confidence in different media platforms, there is the expectation that these variations will also occur among representatives interviewed. According to the survey, women, older and less educated people rely more on TV than younger, more educated male respondents. Radio, in turn, is more reliable for older and more educated men. For print newspapers and magazines, the variations are smaller among the respondents' profile. Social networks are considered reliable by only 5% of Brazilians, and have greater reliability among younger and more educated individuals.

Hypothesis 3) The most effective communication tools considered by representatives for political self-promotion are digital social networks, especially among deputies who have the following profile: young people, higher level of education, fewer legislatures, and belonging to leftist parties.

This hypothesis is based on the argument of Marques *et al.* (2014). Addressing the adoption of Twitter as a communication tool by members of the Chamber of Deputies, the authors conclude that (i) younger representatives have a higher rate of published tweets and more followers; (ii) deputies in the first legislature post more messages, and (iii) representatives considered more leftist tend to tweet more and have more followers (MARQUES *et al.*, 2014). Although the referenced research focuses on the social network Twitter, this approach can expand to other social networks, considering them as a space for debate and visibility of the image of political representatives.

This study employs quantitative methodology to verify the three hypotheses. A face-to-face survey was conducted in the offices of 52 of the 54 representatives who held term of office in the Legislative Assembly of Paraná (ALEP).

The elaboration of the questionnaires implied the accomplishment of two pre-tests, aimed at improving the content of the elaborated questions. The survey, consisting of 17 questions with stimulated response options is divided into two dimensions; (i) media consumption habits by representatives, and (ii) the strategic use of media platforms for political promotion.

Of the 54 representatives who held term of office from May to June 2016 at ALEP, only two deputies did not respond to requests from the investigators, and 41 responded personally to the survey and 11 delegated their responses to their advisors.

Table 1 – Deputies who responded to the survey⁶

State Deputy	Party
Pedro Lupion*	DEM
Plauto Miró*	DEM
Missionário Ricardo Arruda	DEM
Elio Rusch*	DEM
Nelson Justus*	DEM
Nelson Luersen	PDT
Marcio Pauliki*	PDT
Scanavaca	PDT
Requião Filho	PMDB
Anibelli Neto	PMDB
Nereu Moura*	PMDB
Ademir Bier	PMDB
Maria Victória	PP
Schiavinato	PP
Marcio Pacheco	PPL
Cristina Silvestri	PPS
Tercílio Turini	PPS
Pastor Edson Praczyk	PRB
Gilberto Ribeiro	PRB
Alexandre Curi*	PSB
Tiago Amaral*	PSB
Stephanes Junior	PSB
Jonas Guimarães	PSB
Romanelli	PSB
Claudia Pereira	PSC
Evando Araújo	PSC
Paranhos*	PSC
Gilson de Souza	PSC
Palozi	PSC
Wilmar Reichembach	PSC
Ney Leprevost	PSD
Guto Silva	PSD
Cobra Repórter	PSD
Chico Brasileiro	PSD
Marcio Nunes	PSD

⁶ After several attempts, neither Deputies Dr. Batista (PMN) and Luiz Carlos Martins (PSD), nor their advisors responded to the survey.

Hussein Barki	PSD
Paulo Litro	PSDB
Bernardo Carli	PSDB
Evandro Junior	PSDB
André Bueno	PSDB
Alexandre Guimarães*	PSDB
Cantora Mara Lima*	PSDB
Mauro Morais	PSDB
Francisco Buhner	PSDB
Ademar Traiano	PSDB
Adelino Ribeiro	PSL
Professor Lemos	PT
Péricles de Mello	PT
Tadeu Veneri	PT
Tiã Medeiros	PTB
Rasca Rodrigues	PV
Felipe Francischini	SD

* Survey answered by the Member's communication consultant⁷.

Source: The authors (2018).

The dependent variables analyzed here are: (a) journalistic institutions consumed by representatives, (b) reliability given to the media by representatives, and (c) the degree of efficiency that deputies attribute to different media platforms for political self-promotion. The independent variables consist of: (d) parliamentary age, (e) gender, (f) educational level, (g) number of legislatures in the ALEP, (h) ideological position of the party.

To account for the hypotheses, frequency distributions and the results of Gamma or Contingency Coefficient are presented – tests that determine the degree of association between categorical variables (important to emphasize that the tests of statistical significance are not presented because the *corpus* of this work refers to the population and not to a sample). While Gamma is used for ordinal variables, Contingency Coefficient is used for nominal variables. When the result is below 0.4, the association is considered low; if the result is in the range of 0.4 to 0.6, there is a moderate association between the variables; the result above 0.6 indicates high association (FIELD, 2005).

⁷ In these cases, only advisors were available to respond to the survey. Their answers, according to their own statements, are consistent with the habits and opinions of the representatives to whom they represented.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this topic, data on consumption habits and the confidence given to the media by agents of the Legislative Branch are presented. Also detailed are the data on media platforms that deputies find most effective for political self-promotion. At the end, the findings of the survey are discussed, in connection with the literature.

Habits of Information Consumption by State Deputies

This subsection addresses the habits of information consumption by representatives. Table 1 reveals the reading habits of state deputies considering the main Brazilian newspapers and magazines. In this survey question, the interviewee could indicate more than one journalistic institution, with no limit of options. It is important to note that the option was not to differentiate between print and online newspapers (nor print magazines from online magazines), since the intention here was to compare the consumption of different newspaper companies, not different media platforms. Therefore, when the representative claims to be informed through *Folha de S. Paulo*, for example, it is considered both the printed newspaper and the online newspaper.

Table 1 – Journalistic institutions through which representatives claim to have the habit of obtaining information⁸

Journalistic institutions	Percentage of deputies claiming to be informed by the journalistic institution
Gazeta do Povo⁹	96.1% (49)
Folha de S. Paulo	92.2% (47)
Veja	70.6% (36)
O Estado de S. Paulo	52.9% (27)
Época	35.3% (18)
Isto é	35.3% (18)

⁸ Semi-stimulated answer to the following question: “For each of the newspapers and magazines I will cite, answer whether or not you read: 1. Gazeta do Povo, 2. Folha de S. Paulo, 3. O Globo, 4. Tribuna do Paraná, 5. O Estado de S. Paulo, 6. Veja, 7. Época, 8. Isto é, 9. Carta Capital, 10. Other. Which?, 98. NS, 99. NR”.

⁹ At the time of the survey, Gazeta do Povo still had a printed version. Currently, the daily newspaper is only available on digital platform.

O Globo	35.3% (18)
Carta Capital	27.5% (14)
Tribuna do Paraná	21.6% (11)

Source: The authors (2018)

The newspaper *Gazeta do Povo* is the most read by state deputies of Paraná. In addition, when asked if there was another newspaper or magazine that they also considered important from the point of view of information consumption, 21 of the representatives interviewed (almost half of them) indicated other state and local newspapers, such as *Bem Paraná* (statewide), the *Folha de Londrina* (with more evident circulation in the municipality of Londrina) and the *Diário dos Campos* (Ponta Grossa and other municipalities in the region of Campos Gerais).

It is also noted that the newspapers *Folha de S. Paulo* and *O Estado de S. Paulo* are frequently mentioned by the representatives. They were indicated by 92.2% and 52.9% of respondents, respectively. According to the Media and Politics survey (FSB COMUNICAÇÕES, 2016), the *Folha de S. Paulo* is the favorite newspaper of 65% of federal deputies and the *Estado de S. Paulo* is in second place, with 41%. In addition, 75% of national representatives say they read local newspapers from their regions. Therefore, the reading habits of Paraná state deputies are consistent with the habits of representatives in the national legislature.

Representatives' Reliability in Different Media Platforms for Information Consumption

In this subsection, data on representatives' reliability on different media platforms are presented, providing a crossover of this information with the independent variables: age, gender, educational level, number of legislatures in the ALEP, and ideological position of the party to which the deputy is affiliated.

Each interviewee was instructed to indicate only one "media" as the one that presents the most reliable information, with the following options available: television; radio; newspapers (print and online); magazines (print and online); and social networks.

Table 2 – Representatives' reliability in media platforms¹⁰

Media platforms	Percentage of deputies claiming to rely on media platform
Newspapers	38.3% (18)
Television	31.9% (15)
Digital social networks	14.9% (7)
Radio	12.8% (6)
Magazines	2.1% (1)
Total	100% (47) ¹¹

Source: The authors (2018)

Table 2 shows that newspapers and television are the most trusted media platforms by representatives. Social networks are indicated as more reliable by only seven of the respondents.

Table 2 below presents the results of the Gamma / Contingency Coefficient of crossing representatives' trust in different media platforms (dependent variable) and the political and personal profile of representatives – age, gender, educational level, number of legislatures in the ALEP and ideological position of the party (independent variables). A high degree of association is observed only between media platform reliability and educational level, since the Gamma test result is 0.633. There is no association between the other variables, since the tests of these crossings were below 0.4.

Table 2 – Gamma / Contingency Coefficient between representatives' reliability in media platforms and representatives' personal / political profile

	Age	Gender	Education level	Number of legislatures in the ALEP	Ideological position of the party
Reliability in different media platforms	0.163	0.330	0.633*	-0.010	0.115

* There is a high association between the variables.

Source: The authors (2018)

¹⁰ Semi-stimulated answer to the following question: “Among the following media, which one do you most rely in the accuracy of the information? 1. Television, 2. Radio, 3. Newspaper, 4. Magazine, 5. Internet social networks, 98. NS, 99. NR”.

¹¹ Five Members did not answer to this question.

Table 3 shows the cross-frequencies between representatives' reliability in information conveyed through different media (dependent variable) and their education level (independent variable).

Table 3 – Table 3 - Reliability in information conveyed by media platforms x education level of deputies

Platform	Complete high school	Incomplete university education	Complete university education	Total
Television	80% (4)	25% (1)	26.3% (10)	31.9% (15)
Radio	20% (1)	25% (1)	10.5% (4)	12.8% (6)
Newspapers	0%	50% (2)	42.1% (16)	38.3% (18)
Magazines	0%	0%	2.6% (1)	2.1% (1)
Digital social networks	0%	0%	18.4% (7)	4.9% (7)
Total	100% (5)	100% (4)	100% (38)	100% (47)

Source: The authors (2018)

The Gama value (0.633) indicates that there is a high association between the two variables, that is, (a) representatives' trust in television, radio, newspapers, magazines and digital social networks varies according to (b) their educational level. While for representatives with complete high school television is considered more reliable (80%), those with access to university education rely more on newspapers: with 50% (those with incomplete university education) and 42.1% (with complete university education). Social networks, in turn, were indicated as more reliable only by seven representatives – all with complete higher education. Magazines occupy the last place, being indicated as more reliable only by one representative – with complete university education. However, it is clear that ten of the representatives with complete university education still indicate television as the most reliable journalistic platform.

It is also noted that among the 52 deputies interviewed, 78.8% have completed higher education and 7.7% have incomplete higher education. This table is consistent with the data on the level of education of federal deputies of the current legislature, as 80% of them have completed higher education (REIS, 2014).

Platforms Considered Most Effective for Political Self-Promotion

The representatives who responded to the survey were instructed to assign different degrees of efficiency to the media platforms with regard to political self-promotion. Respondents had to indicate one of the available options (not efficient, little efficient, efficient or very efficient) to assess the effectiveness of each platform.

Table 4 – Representatives' Opinion on Media Efficiency for Political Self-Promotion

Platform	Not efficient	Little efficient	Efficient	Very efficient	Total
Television	1.9% (1)	13.5% (7)	32.7% (17)	51.9% (27)	100% (52)
Radio	0%	11.6% (6)	44.4% (23)	44.4% (23)	100% (52)
State / national newspapers¹²	7.7% (4)	38.5% (20)	50% (26)	3.8 (2)	100% (52)
Local newspapers	3.8% (2)	21.2% (11)	51.9% (27)	23.1% (12)	100% (52)
Digital social networks	0%	1.9% (1)	30.8% (16)	67.3% (35)	100% (52)

Source: The authors (2018)

In Table 4, we can see that the deputies of the state of Paraná consider social networks more efficient for their own political promotion. Among the 52 respondents, only one marked this type of media as inefficient. When asked about social media, they say that use them mostly for self-promotion, 98.1% identified Facebook first.

Television is considered efficient for political promotion by 51.9% of representatives. Regarding the radio, 23 respondents consider it very efficient and another 23 indicate it as efficient for political promotion. State and national newspapers and local newspapers, in turn, are considered efficient by 50% and 51.9% of respondents, respectively.

Note that the “not efficient” answer was little triggered by the respondents. In the case of radio and digital social networks, no representative has stated that these media are inefficient for political self-promotion. This result implies that, for state deputies, the minimal visibility obtained through any of the mentioned media platforms represents the possibility of promoting their public image.

¹² Here again, the online and print versions of state or national newspapers and local newspapers were not differentiated.

The following are the intersections between the variables: opinion of representatives about the effectiveness of digital social networks for political self-promotion, on the one hand, and age, educational level, number of legislatures in the ALEP and ideological position of the party, on the other hand. Table 3 presents the Gamma values between the variables.

Table 3 – Range results for representatives' opinion on the effectiveness of digital social networks for political promotion and their personal / political profile

	Age	Educational level	Number of legislatures in the ALEP	Ideological position of the party
Opinion about the efficiency of digital social networks	- 0.421*	- 0.106	0.057	0.256

* There is a moderate association between variables.

Source: The authors (2018)

Table 3 shows that there is an association only between (a) efficiency attributed to digital social networks for political self-promotion and (b) age. The Gamma value (-0.421) shows that there is negative and moderate dependence between the variables. This means that as the age of representatives increases, the assessment that social networks are very efficient tends to reduce. Table 5 details the results of this intersection.

Table 5 – Representatives' opinion on the efficiency of digital social networks for political self-promotion x parliamentary age

Degree of efficiency	Up to 40 years old	From 41 and 50 years old	From 51 to 59 years old	60 years or older	Total
Not efficient	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Little efficient	7.7% (1)	0%	0%	0%	1.9% (1)
Efficient	7.7% (1)	30.8% (4)	26.7% (4)	63.6% (7)	30.8% (16)
Very efficient	84.6% (11)	69.2% (9)	63.6% (7)	36.4% (4)	67.3% (35)
Total	100% (13)	100% (13)	100% (15)	100% (11)	100% (52)
Gamma = -0.421					

Source: The authors (2018)

Most representatives, regardless of their age, find social networks efficient or very effective for political self-promotion. However, it appears that among older deputies there is a tendency to reduce the “very efficient” response. Considering representatives up to 40 years old, eleven state

that social networks are very efficient. Only a deputy under 40 considers them to be inefficient for political self-promotion. Among the 41 to 50-year-old deputies, nine consider social networks to be very efficient. The number is seven among deputies aged 51 to 59 and four among deputies over 60.

Discussion of Results and Conclusion

The aims of this article were (a) to investigate which journalistic institutions are the most used by representatives for information consumption, (b) to verify the degree of reliability they place on different platforms and, finally, (c) to examine the degree of efficiency that representatives attribute to different media platforms for self-promotion. For this, three hypotheses were proposed.

According to H1, most representatives tend to follow coverage by local and state newspapers. This hypothesis is confirmed because, since they are interested in reaching a statewide audience, deputies follow more closely the coverage provided by journalistic companies operating in the state itself. Only three of the 52 representatives interviewed did not indicate being readers of the *Gazeta do Povo* newspaper. In addition, 21 representatives (almost half of respondents) stated that they are informed through other state or local newspapers, such as *Bem Paraná*, *Folha de Londrina* and *Diário dos Campos*. This result demonstrates that representatives are aware of local domain news – similar to what was found when the focus of the investigation is federal representatives, as indicated by the Media and Politics survey (FSB COMUNICAÇÕES, 2016).

In this sense, it is clear that, besides obtaining information from local and state newspapers, the reading habits of the interviewed representatives reflect the habits of the Brazilian population, since the newspapers *O Estado de S. Paulo* and *Folha de S. Paulo* are among the most read in the country (PODER360, 2017; ANJ, 2017). In addition, the results also resemble the reading habits of national representatives, who indicate *Folha de S. Paulo* and *Estado de S. Paulo* as their favorite vehicles – and 75% of them say they read local newspapers from their regions (FSB COMUNICAÇÕES, 2016).

H2 suggested that representatives' reliability in different media platforms varies with each deputy's personal and political profile. This hypothesis is partially confirmed, since the data show that their confidence in the media has a high association with the level of education of the representatives in the Assembly and a low association with the other independent variables. That is, deputies who have only completed high school say they rely more on the information on television, while representatives with higher education (complete or not) say they rely more on newspapers.

H3 has also been partially confirmed. This hypothesis revealed that the communication tools considered most effective by representatives for political self-promotion would be digital social networks, especially among the younger deputies, with a higher education level, fewer legislatures, and belonging to more leftist parties. Only one of the 52 respondents indicated that digital social networks are inefficient for political self-promotion, while 16 representatives considered them efficient and another 35 said they were very efficient. However, Gamma's result shows that there is a moderate and negative association, only between age and opinions about social networks. That is, as the age of the representative increases, their tendency to consider this media platform to be very efficient for political self-promotion decreases. Among older people, the predominant answer to this question is "efficient", and not "very efficient".

In general, concerning the three dimensions of data analyzed here (consumption habits; trust attributed to the media; and the opinions of the agents of the Legislative Branch about the efficiency of different media platforms for political self-promotion), it is considered that the representatives involved in the research, while relying little on the accuracy of the information conveyed by social networks, consider these platforms efficient or very efficient when it comes to projecting their images. In this case, this implies that the representatives know that citizens / voters are in the digital communication environment and that they need to reach out to this public, even though the deputies resist informing themselves through the connections established on social networks on the Internet. Here, once again, we can see that the habits of the deputies of the state of Paraná are consistent with the media habits of Brazilian citizens, since, according to the 2016 Brazilian Media Survey, "most internet users trust few times or never trust the news of websites, blogs and social networks" (BRASIL, 2016, p. 33).

Moreover, it is clear that the independent variables are not the associated, on the one hand, with representatives' reliability in the media and, on the other hand, with their opinions on the effectiveness of digital social networks for political self-promotion. While in the first dimension of data (representatives' confidence in the media) only the level of education shows a high association with the dependent variable, in the second dimension (opinions about the efficiency of digital social networks for political self-promotion) only age has a moderate association with the dependent variable. We can then reinforce the diagnosis that media consumption habits by representatives are not necessarily consistent with their opinions about the media used for political self-promotion in a permanent campaign context.

Finally, we must recognize a set of limitations of the research presented here. Firstly, it is true that this work favors a statewide study. Nonetheless, it is believed that the text may collaborate in the effort to deepen the investigations concerning the relationship that agents of the political field

maintain with different media platforms, for their own information consumption or to promote their public images. Finally, it should be noted that at times of election campaign, the opinions and behaviors declared by representatives may differ, as well as their associations with the independent variables analyzed here. In this sense, further analytical endeavors are necessary to complement the findings revealed here.

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