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College of Social  
Sciences

**Activism in today's rapidly changing media ecology:  
Understanding how environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs  
created new media practices in Chile [2016-2017]**

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy

School of Social and Political Sciences

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## Abstract of the thesis

Today's media ecology is in constant change due to rapid technological innovation, which is reshaping how social movement organisations (SMOs) use the media. Researchers have coined the concepts of 'media practices' and 'hybrid media ecology' to describe how activists give new uses to a range of online, offline, mainstream and alternative media practices. They have mostly examined grassroots networks against socioeconomic inequalities in Europe and North America and democratisation uprisings in Arab countries. In contrast, post-materialist movement experiences in South America have received scarce attention. Moreover, existing research on post-materialist movements elsewhere has made broad generalisations about them without engaging in their heterogeneity. This thesis aims to address these gaps by studying Chile as a single country case study and comparing the practices of its environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs. It strives to understand better in what ways and for what reasons SMOs have created new media practices in this context, and why these practices have varied across different SMOs. Based on informed grounded theoretical insights built from semi-structured interviews with SMO representatives, and triangulated with an analysis of documents, websites and social media accounts, the thesis makes three key arguments. First, it finds that nearly all the SMOs included in the study have created new media practices principally to reach more publics with the direct help of their constituents. However, there are some important differences regarding SMOs' organisational responses to this process. The thesis argues that a large minority of the studied SMOs are innovators that lead the development of new media practices, whereas another large minority emulate and indirectly expand these innovations. There are also a few cases of resistance to the media overall. Innovators seem either committed to inclusiveness as an end in itself or inclined to use citizen involvement as a means to gain political leverage, whereas emulators imitate trends in their field to remain current and appropriate. Thus, key to explaining these different objectives are SMOs' goals and resources. Finally, the thesis contends that innovation is much higher in the LGBTI+ movement while resistance only exists in the environmental movement. Political divisions, resource inequalities and geographical dispersion explain this. These findings make two important contributions to the literature. First, they show that variations across post-materialist movements should not be overlooked as they indicate the influence of the sociopolitical context on SMOs' media praxis. Secondly, the concepts of innovation, emulation and resistance help account for heterogeneity in how SMOs react to their media ecology and serve as conceptual tools for further comparative research.

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## **Author's declaration**

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signed: David A. Jofré

Signature:

*They didn't get a good rap when I was growing up,  
the homosexuals. We didn't have social media like  
we do now, but... 'Letters to the Editor'? Let me  
tell you: Slow Twitter... Brutal!*

**—Hannah Gatsby ('Nanette', 2018)**

## Chapter 1. Introduction

This thesis explores the process of creation and adoption of new media practices among social movement organisations (SMOs). It fundamentally argues that today's hybrid media ecology has deeply shaped SMOs' media practices in different ways depending on the organisational response that these organisations have had to ongoing technological changes, and the culture and structure of the social movement in which these organisations are embedded. Interest for this topic has arisen from the fact that the global media ecology is increasingly becoming more complex and dynamic after decades of unprecedented accumulation and convergence of various types of media platforms and outlets. Forty years ago, the only way to learn about the news and political debates at a mass scale was by reading the press in the morning, listening to radio programmes or in front of the TV at home. In that context, groups with alternative ideas of what was tolerable, rightful or deviant in society had only two options to reach people and convince them of their ideas. One option was to contact journalists and adjust their messages to their requirements, which meant sacrificing part of their radicalism in order to get past the news media gatekeepers (Bob, 2005; Cottle, 2000; 2016; Waisbord, 2011). The main reward of this route was eminently quantitative, meaning that activists could reach the masses to publicise some of their claims (Powers, 2014). The second option was to produce their own –sometimes very– rudimentary media outlets, such as 'zines' and community radio stations, which meant sacrificing their visibility in order to circulate unfiltered information and ideas among their peers (Atton, 2002; Downing, 2001; Rodríguez, 2003). This route reduced their audience to a niche but provided them with enough freedom to stay radical (Atton, 2010). For a long time, these two communication options shaped activists' actions, which resulted in various types of movement groups, some more moderate and publicly visible than others.

This situation changed dramatically with the advent of the Web 2.0. First websites and weblogs appeared in the late 1990s, which allowed activists to produce information faster and at a lower cost than before (Bennett, 2008;

Shirky, 2003). At that time, it was believed that citizens with education and access to technology could express a grievance, deliver alternative information and even contradict or add to the news media in a personal blog (Bennett, 2008; Messner & Distaso, 2008). In this context, Shirky (2003) made famous the phrase: 'it costs nothing to launch a weblog.' Then social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube emerged by the mid-2000s, which made it possible for people from all over the world to interact in real time and navigate through a wealth of data, ideas, events and campaigns, as well as jokes, fake information and memes. In 2011, mass protests against social inequality broke out in the Northern hemisphere with the particularity that protesters did not focus on chasing journalists this time but instead used their mobile phones to record video evidence of the events, post updates online and coordinate with others on the spot (Cammaerts, 2015; Howard et al., 2011). The press was quick to refer to this protest wave as the 'Twitter revolution', but experts remained divided between those who thought that nothing really changed after these events and those who did not recall an information exchange of this magnitude in recent history (Castells, 2009; Morozov, 2009; Shirky, 2008; Warf, 2011).

Despite the divisions in how the impact of social media on activism has been interpreted, it seems quite clear that today's media ecology has become more complex than in the past, when only two main options for communication were available, one at the mass scale and another at the niche scale. Rapid technological innovation is now a commonplace as new digital media platforms are produced every year. Older media outlets have had to repurpose their routines and content in response to this process, with the example of many news organisations turning into some sort of Facebook and Twitter broadcasters to keep their audiences engaged (Kammer et al., 2015; Wikström & Ellonen, 2015). Activist groups, in turn, have attempted to update their media practices by continuously adapting to this dynamic environment, some more successfully than others. Scholars have paid a great deal of attention to these developments. This has increased the risk of having techno-determinist views focused on the effects of digital technologies on social activism. But most importantly, it has produced a vast amount of data and analysis, partly because social media content has been not only an object of study in itself but also one of the largest databases

ever in social researchers' hands. Thus, experts from different disciplines, mainly social movements and political communication, have examined the relationship between social activism and the media. Their findings have made crucial contributions to our understanding of this relationship. Pre-internet literature shed light on the strategies and languages that social movements and NGOs had to adopt to 'make the news' (Bob, 2001; Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Manning, 2001). Similarly, as mentioned earlier, there is a body of literature demonstrating of how websites, blogs and social media have lowered the costs, accelerated the rhythm and broadened the reach of citizen participation in collective action (Bennett, 2003; Bennett et al., 2008; Theocharis, 2011; Valenzuela, 2013). In fact, recent research has tried to determine whether people today engage in a more spontaneous, flexible, temporary and personalised way in social movements (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). This has generated a strand of literature focused on the transformative effects of the internet on activism (Bimber et al., 2005; Chadwick, 2007; Karpf, 2010).

Despite this large and sophisticated body of literature, gaps have persisted in the study of mediated activism. With some exceptions, the increased interest in spontaneous mobilisation, leaderless movements and connective action has implied that SMOs' communication processes have been somewhat neglected. This is partly because these studies have focused on addressing the pressing and exciting new phenomenon of 'organising without organisations' in activism (Shirky, 2008), meaning loosely coordinated movement experiences and flash mobs enabled by the use of social media (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Gerbaudo, 2016). Moreover, the literature has built some kind of division line between old (obsolete?) and new (promising?) media (Chadwick, 2013; Mattoni, 2012). Each new media innovation has been investigated in turn, and specialised studies of the effects of a single platform, take Twitter for example, now abound in the field. However, it has been suggested earlier that 'older' media have not really disappeared but tried to thrive in new conditions, which in the long run generates more of a 'sedimentation' than a fragmentation of media platforms and outlets (Chadwick, 2007; Karpf, 2012).

Recently, some scholars have taken into account the aforementioned process of accumulation and convergence of media over time, for which they have coined the concept of ‘hybrid media system’ (Chadwick, 2013; 2017; Flesher Fominaya, 2016; Karpf, 2017) or ‘hybrid media ecology’ (Flesher Fominaya, 2016; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). They have also offered a different view to the use of the media by activists in this hybrid context, referred to as ‘media practices’ (Cammaerts, 2015; Jeppesen et al., 2014; Treré & Mattoni, 2016). These practices have explained better the citizens’ routines of participation, trust, creativity and decision-making involved in the use of different types of media available in an increasingly diversified media ecology (Mattoni & Treré, 2014; Rodríguez, 2011). This has implied a turn in the literature that had documented the relationship between social activism and the media, which in this thesis will be referred to as the ‘hybridity turn.’ Overall, this new terminology is a more fruitful approach than prior ones to understand how activist groups give new uses to a range of online, offline, mainstream and alternative media practices in a media environment that has become increasingly more complex than before.

The focus of the hybridity literature has been insightful but limited in some ways. At the theoretical level, this literature has helped gain a better understanding of how activists interact with their media ecology, which implies viewing them more as active creators of content, communication routines and technology innovations than passive subjects of media representation. Paradoxically, creativity has been foregrounded in this literature as a relevant dimension of this topic but without examining it in-depth. Little is known about how social activists take elements of their ecology to create their own media practices. Furthermore, the reasons for activist groups to develop new ways of using the media for activist purposes are not well understood, especially considering that not all SMOs have engaged extensively with newer media despite their apparent benefits, and we do not really know why. As a matter of fact, the hybridity turn has tended to focus on adopters much more than on those activists who do not adopt new media practices, and therefore some opportunities for relevant comparisons have been missed. In addition, this strand has largely examined cases of social movements against social inequalities in

Europe and the US, and democratisation uprisings in Arab countries to some extent. These movements have been comparatively spontaneous, leaderless and decentralised in nature (Harlow, 2011; Mattoni & Treré, 2014). They have been labelled as grassroots activist experiences (Jeppesen et al., 2014) or other new terms such as ‘netroots’ (Karpf, 2012) and ‘connective action’ (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). In this regard, this research has connected well with earlier literature on ‘organising without organisations’ (Earl, 2014; Shirky, 2008), but paradoxically has moved it away from the long-held understandings of SMOs and NGOs in relation to most forms of movement practices (Stockemer, 2013). There has been of course exceptions in some of this work, such as Karpf’s work (2012) on digital organisations and Bimber’s work (1998) on fluid issue-based groups, which offer initial clues for this research to embark in exploring SMOs’ media practices in a hybrid media ecology.

In consideration of the gaps described above, an in-depth account of activist media practices requires a broader representation of the actors involved in their creation, use and contestation. For this reason, this thesis will add to this emerging literature by firstly revealing SMOs’ responses to the process of creation of new media practices. Secondly, it will shed light on the factors that shape these responses. It will do so by answering the following research question: In what ways and for what reasons have SMOs created new media practices in a rapidly changing media ecology, and why have these practices varied across different SMOs? The second part of this question, which indicates an interest in investigating the variety of ways in which SMOs created new media practices, is of great importance because it would be simplistic to assume that all SMOs do so in identical ways and motivated by the exact same reasons. A crucial lesson drawn from organisational theorists’ examination of SMOs is that their action repertoires vary importantly due to diverse internal and external conditions (Clemens, 1993; Fligstein & McAdam, 2011; McAdam, 1995; Tarrow, 1998). This, however, has been rarely been examined in relation to media practices, and such a gap motivates this investigation.

This research will explore the above topic in light of contemporary post-materialist movement experiences in South America, specifically environmental

and LGBTI+ SMOs in Chile. It will look at these organisations' media practices between 2016 and 2017 as a specific timeframe for the analysis, as these were the years when data were collected on the ground and a particular snapshot was generated in relation to the ever-changing Chilean socio-technological landscape. This type of movements and this country have received scarce attention in comparison to highly materialist mobilisation in the Global North and Arab countries. This decision is also informed by a particular interest in mid-income democracies, where social movements often have more at stake due to heavy socio-economic inequalities, more state repression and weaker associational ties than in other countries (Delamaza, 2015; Jara, 2012; Jocelyn-Holt, 1998). In this regard, it is also important to highlight that in Latin America the conceptualisation of environmental and LGBTI+ politics as post-materialistic is highly contested due to the very socio-economic struggles that have defined the region in current times (see Schlosberg, 2019 and Schlosberg & Coles, 2016). Empirically, thus, the thesis will make a contribution to a better understanding of the logics of mediated activism in a slightly less usual context, which is post-authoritarian and located in the Global South.

Moreover, there has not been much research on more stable social movements, such as the environmental and LGBTI+ movements, which in fact make up the bulk of social activism in most democracies around the world, and in South America particularly in the last decades (Encarnación, 2011; Kernecker & Wagner, 2018; Scherman et al., 2015). The literature has instead tended to focus on a quite narrow and somewhat unusual type of social activism, digital and spontaneous, which due to its short duration has arguably left a weak historical record in comparison to more powerful identity-driven movements. Such a narrow focus is probably biasing our current view of how movement groups use and engage with this changing media ecology. Moreover, since the research question presented above is focused on some differences between SMOs, this research will open a window of opportunity to explore distinctions between two post-materialist movements that have been often treated as very similar in the literature. How differently do these two movements engage with the process of creation of new media practices, and why? The first clue to start such comparison is that the environmental movement cannot be easily considered

post-materialistic in Chile due to its historical political cleavages on the basis of socio-economic distribution.

The thesis's main argument in relation to the questions posited above will be explained in more detail in the following sections, and it can be summarised from the outset as follows: a snapshot from 2016 and 2017 showed that almost all the studied Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs played a role in the creation of new 'hybrid' media practices, but this engagement was not homogeneous across these organisations. In fact, SMOs' role can be innovative or leading such process of development of new practices, and emulative or copying the behaviour of leading organisations in their movement. A few environmental SMOs in this study have posed some resistance to the incentives of today's rapidly changing media ecology to adopt new media practices. SMO's goals and resources are key factors that explain these different responses to the creation of new media practices. In turn, these factors are highly determined by the particular sociopolitical context of Chile and its influence in the configuration of these two post-materialist movements.

Up to this point, this introductory chapter has presented the main research topic that justifies this research project and has situated its questions in the different literatures that have studied the relationship between social activism and media. It has then outlined the thesis' main argument in relation to these gaps and questions. In what follows, the chapter will offer a rationale for the selection of Chile as a research context and its domestic environmental and LGBTI+ movements for case comparison, and then will briefly explain how the research process has been carried out with an emphasis on key methodological decisions made throughout its development. Subsequently, it will present in more detail the thesis' main findings and arguments that were summarised in this introductory section, and then conclude by outlining how the thesis will be organised following from here.

### **1.1. Research rationale: Chilean postmaterialist activism**

In connection with the topic presented at the beginning of this chapter, the existence of a geographical unbalance in the study of mediated activism

becomes very clear. Most of the recent research on activists' media practices has been carried out in the Global North. On the one hand, seminal concepts such as 'activist media practices' and 'hybrid media ecology' have been developed in light of European experiences of resistance against austerity policies, with some replication in other G20 nations. Nearly all of these contexts are characterised by the maturity of democratic rule, advanced market economy and a strong penetration of new communication technologies. These factors have had high significance for what academics have found empirically. Inevitably, these in fact constitute less restrictive environments for social movements to emerge, sustain themselves over time and even thrive, as well as to gain access to media representation and access to communication technology. This thesis ventures to argue that the fact that scholars have found a diverse array of media practices created and used in the context of activism, as well as evidence of powerful mobilisation processes among disenfranchised youth, may be partly explained by the choice of cases studies with favourable conditions for these phenomena to occur in the first place.

On the other hand, most of the empirical data about links between digital literacy, participation and coordination of offline protest activity has been conducted in semi or fully authoritarian and highly unstable regimes in North Africa and the Levant, i.e. Egypt, Iran, Libya and Tunisia (Aday et al., 2010; Howard et al., 2011; Rane & Salem, 2012; Youmans & York, 2012). This is a special mention to the 'Arab Spring' stage of the research agenda on digitally enabled activism. But again, considering the dramatic turn of many of these events in the last part of the 2010s, it is not surprising that researchers have been overly optimistic about the potential of CMC and mobile phones for democratisation and regime change in unstable political environments. As a result of the predominance of G20 and Arab countries in the literature, mid-income democracies have been less explored. As the conditions under which social movements emerge, sustain themselves and communicate are likely to differ across countries and political regimes (Carroll & Ratner, 1999; Tilly, 1984), we may notice that there is little understanding of how SMOs have reacted to the advent of the hybrid media ecology in the mid-income countries of South America. Developing countries do not fit the category of mature democracies

nor do they resemble authoritarian or unstable regimes. Thus, the ambivalences characterising most Southern American socio-political systems offer highly interesting cases for the examination of social activism and media.

As outlined in the first part of this introduction, Chile has been chosen as a single country case study for this thesis, and its environmental and LGBTI+ movements as the two specific cases for comparison within this context. The decision to examine Chile responds to the fact that it is an information-rich context of research, which stands as a good representation of post-authoritarian politics in the Global South. The country also represents to an extent some of the most important trends that characterise South America in general, which are a recent transition to democratic rule, a shift to neoliberal economic models in the 1990s and unresolved deep social inequalities (Álvarez et al., 1998; Garretón, 1999; Somma, 2012). Chile is quite often cited as a textbook example of elite-driven and slow process of democratic consolidation (Foweraker, 2002), as well as a particular case of tension between successful market economic policies and a dramatically weak political culture (Madariaga, 2018). These have been overlooked conditions in the observation of activist media practices. Chile has one of the most open market economies of the world, and its successful neoliberal policies have been considered ‘exportable’ (Cabalín, 2014c; Madariaga, 2018; Miller et al., 2018). The country’s media system is a good example of its highly competitive private sector, and consequently its rate of adoption of new technologies is quite high as well: eighty per cent of the population has regular access to internet and uses Facebook every day (Koller et al., 2017: 16; We are Social, 2018).

The aforementioned prosperous economic factors are combined with a fragmented and highly polarised civil society, whose manifestation has been very repressed by the state apparatus during democratic rule (Sorj & Fausto, 2015), all of this in spite of the consensus that characterised Chile’s transition to democracy (Mellado & van Dalen, 2017). It is also combined with a restrictive media system, where the ownership of the most important media holdings is in hands of a narrow group of interests (Poblete, 2016), and where the news media do little to broadcast political issues and motivate people to participate in civic

discussion in comparison to other media systems (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Larraín & Valenzuela, 2004). In relation to technology, despite high adoption rates, as most Latin American countries, there are digital divides based on age, education, geography and income that make it impossible for Chile to reach universal access to technology (Koller et al., 2017: 16; Welp & Wheatley, 2012: 180). Being non-federated, the country also has an extremely unusual geography that has helped shaping these unbalances: 90 per cent of the IT sector is concentrated in the centre of the country (Koller et al., 2017). Overall, Northern and Southern regions are quite far from a densely populated centre, and isolated from each other, which has marginalised many local communities from the ‘blooming’ economic development of the country (Delamaza et al., 2017).

But after decades of demobilisation, today the country faces a frank process of revitalisation of social movement activity (Garcés, 2012; Madariaga, 2018), with of course some restrictions (Garretón et al., 2011). New Chilean generations of protesters, in particular, have found ways to mobilise and coordinate collective action outside the logics of the mainstream news media and institutions. Hence, today’s re-emergence of movements in Chile has coincided with the normalisation of new technology. Some studies have found that the use of social media in Chile is correlated with the organisation of student, labour and environmental protests in recent years (Cabalín, 2014b; Scherman et al., 2015; Valenzuela et al., 2012; 2014; Welp & Wheatley, 2012).

However, differently from the latitudes examined in the ‘hybrid turn’ in mediated activism studies –where grassroots movements have thrived–, Chilean civil society was the result of a long ‘NGOisation’ process, pretty much like in most countries of the region (Álvarez et al., 1998; Álvarez, 1999). NGOisation is a process by which movements began to professionalise and institutionalise into organisations that combine activism with policy advocacy work, often in constant communication with transnational advocacy networks and under the direct and indirect influence of their actions, e.g. mandates and development programmes (Álvarez, 1999; 2009; Kaldor, 2003b; Lang, 2012; Paternotte, 2015). Nevertheless, Chile’s economic development has prevented it from continuing to be the recipient of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in recent decades,

thus making the Chilean State the main provider of assistance (Moreno, 2011; OECD, 2013: 12-13). Limitations on NGOs' access to international funding has increased their dependency on elites and the State to obtain resources and this situation has resulted into the professionalisation of their pressure practices (Álvarez, 2009: 180). This trend provides arguments to suggest that movements have followed a highly institutionalised path in recent years in Chile and could explain the visibility and impact of SMO activity in comparison to less institutionalised movements that have been rather weak.

The reasons behind the choice of Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs in particular respond to empirical gaps in the literature and their importance in the today's Chilean activist landscape. Post-materialist movements have been overlooked in most of the literature on digitally enabled activism and the 'hybridity' turn that followed from there. Yet, these movements are very important today. They have gained momentum and count among the most prominent movement networks in today's world (Stein, 2009: 756). Both movements rely on the collective participation of their beneficiaries and have turned to be two of the most illustrative cases of contemporary popular mobilisation across the globe (Castells, 2000: 2-3). The LGBTI+ movement has contested sexual and gender normativity throughout the world, becoming a well-known community standing against binary ideas of family, love and identity and in connection with feminism in many cases (Castells, 2000). The environmental movement is a 'textbook' example of a widely supported movement, which has been able to convince most people of its values and win political appeal over the years (Castells, 2000: 3). Lastly, these movements count among the most adept to use the media in recent history (Castells, 2000).

In the context of Chile, the significance of these two movements is partly linked to their incorporation in transnational advocacy networks, which allowed them to acquire organised structures where NGOs play a pivotal bridging role (Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 185). By combining research context and cases, the investigation explores an interesting path. It has been argued in the literature that movement campaigning gains intensity in countries with high rates of internet adoption (Welp & Wheatley, 2012: 181). This is because digital

media help campaigners easily reach geographically dispersed publics (Welp & Wheatley, 2012: 181). Arguably, campaigners have faced different conditions in Chile due to its conservative culture linked to Catholicism, which affects specifically LGBTI+ movements (Steidl, 2016), and due to its economic model based on the extraction of natural resources, which concerns environmental movements (Madariaga, 2018). These two major trends shape post-materialist mobilisation in very specific ways and only a few studies have addressed this in detail. As a matter of fact, the idea of conceiving the environmental movement in Chile and other countries of South America as post-materialistic has produced heated debate among scholars. Schlosberg (2019) has recently proposed that we should define environmental mobilisation as a form of ‘sustainable materialism’, because its demands and lifestyles go beyond the mere expression of an identity. In Chile, environmental movements have struggled more for land ownership and resource redistribution rather than recycling behaviour or the protection of regions of pristine nature (Carruthers & Rodríguez, 2009; Medel et al., 2012).

Conclusively, besides their evident similarities and potential contrasts, the chief reason why post-materialist movements are the centre of interest of this comparative study is related to how they emerged and sustained themselves in the peculiar sociopolitical conditions of Chile described before. As mentioned above, some students of social movements have looked at the impact of the 2011 student mobilisations in Chile (see (Cabalín, 2014b; Somma, 2012)). This was a landmark mobilisation after decades of demobilisation in the country, and yet its policy impact was ambiguous (Cabalín, 2014c) and it did not last long enough to become a stable movement. Conversely, the environmental and LGBTI+ movements have been active in Chile even before the return of democratic rule (Garretón, 1989). For example, the LGBTI+ movement has been growing since 1990 at a steady pace with various victories in terms of policy implementation (Encarnación, 2011). These movements have not disappeared quickly as the ‘flash’ student movement did so, and offer interesting ongoing contrasts in relation to the standard definition of post-materialism. Their sustainability and growth help have a generous timeframe to observe and discuss the process of creation of new media practices, and pinpoint substantive findings about their interaction with today’s changing media ecology.

## 1.2. Research process, main findings and their implications

In light of the gaps presented in the previous sections of this chapter, this thesis has posited a research question that investigates the ways and reasons of environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs to create new media practices in today's Chilean hybrid media ecology. It also aims to account for variations across SMOs in relation to these practices. This question has been addressed by building grounded theoretical insights from a specific snapshot of today's Chilean media ecology. As outlined earlier, empirical data were produced during two fieldwork periods between 2016 and 2017 in four regions of Chile. Given the lack of significant empirical research on the creation of new media practices within the context of today's rapidly changing media ecology, and the diverse ways in which SMOs take part in this process, this thesis used an informed grounded theory approach (IGT). IGT is a specific version of the methodological strategies of grounded theory that emphasises empirical data in the construction of concepts to explain reality (Charmaz, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and relies on previous literature in a critical, flexible and creative way (Thornberg, 2012; Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). Under this guidance, the fieldwork enabled me to conduct qualitative semi-structured interviews with representatives from 25 environmental and 16 LGBTI+ SMOs, and to collect more than 30 print documents, which included annual reports, brochures, advertising pieces and statements. To ensure data robustness, the analysis was triangulated with websites and social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) of the sampled organisations, which counted as documents. Taking both print and online documents, the total material under analysis reached a total of 136 pieces. Thus, this thesis used a mixed qualitative methods approach that triangulated various data sources.

The research process described above made it possible for the thesis to argue that Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs had different organisational responses to the creation of new media practices and their current media ecology. This has implied that the new media practices adopted by Chilean SMOs in reaction to the changing environment have not been uniform at all. Variations in SMO response also reveal how the process of creation of new practices is a negotiated one, because SMOs react to changes that have been brought about by

other organisations. These responses are anchored in different literatures, but most notably in neo-institutionalism and SMO studies. The evidence presented in the thesis connects with a broader theoretical model that helps explain the different ways in which SMOs have created new media practices and their reasons to pursue this goal. In consequence, it has been possible to identify the importance of SMOs' goals and ideology –namely, their ideas of how social activism should be organised–, their resources and built professional capacity, and the movement identity they represent in shaping their way and reasons for creating new media practices.

Further to the above chief argument, the thesis has found that SMOs have developed new media practices by blending traditional and non-conventional routines, technologies and content of practices already established in their media ecology. Thus, this blending activity combines different components of existing media practices in unconventional ways, producing 'hybrid' versions of them. Lending support to this idea, four distinct types of 'hybrid' media practices have been conceptualised on the basis of empirical evidence from the studied SMOs. A typology of hybrid media practices is an original contribution to the literature on media hybridity and helps understand better both the continuity of conventional media practices and their renovation due to the action of activist groups. These four types of hybrid media practices are: *selective news feeds*, *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*, *citizen editorial committees* and *multi-layered marketing campaigns*. In relation to them, the thesis has found that most SMOs seem to take part to some extent, and in some way, in this process of development of media practices. The majority does so in order to interact with their constituents for community-building purposes, and with bystanders and decision-makers for influence purposes, all simultaneously through one action rather than separate conventional practices for each public as it was the case in the recent past. Most generally, in their attempt to interact with various publics, SMOs tend to rely on some form of direct involvement of their constituents in communicative action they set out. This involvement may be pursued as an end in itself, as an instrument to gain political leverage, or simply as an unintentional outcome of the use of hybrid media practices, which from the outset has established different patterns of hybrid communication

across SMOs, and consequently diverse approaches to the four hybrid media practices that have been listed above.

Crucially, then, and certainly not well recognised in the literature, not all SMOs combine these different media platforms, routines and contents in the same way, or for the same reasons. First, there is variation between those adopting hybrid media practices –adopters– and a few organisations that do not, who are referred to in this research as non-adopters. Secondly, the research process has demonstrated that the development of new activist media practices is prompted by innovators, copied and indirectly expanded by emulators, and also resisted by non-adopters, which are the three main organisational responses that SMOs tended to have in this process. These organisational responses were in part contingent upon SMOs' goals and resources. Almost half of the total SMOs under study were categorised as innovative in their use of media practices, and another large minority were categorised as emulators. Most innovators concentrated in the LGBTI+ movement, while a minor proportion was found among environmental SMOs. A minority of environmental SMOs, and crucially none among LGBTI+ organisations, met the criteria to be categorised as non-adopters that resist the renovation of their media practices.

Innovators are early-adopter organisations situated at the frontline in the process of development of new hybrid media practices. At the empirical level, these organisations have offered a consistent narrative and awareness of how blending different components of existing media practices helps them meet their goals. As behaviour, innovation entails an exploration of the media ecology in order to adopt new uses of the media for clear-cut sustainability, visibility and political influence goals. The process has two different pathways, which are treated as alternative pathways of media practice innovation. One pathway is eminently ideological and is followed by the broad majority of innovative SMOs. In this pathway, SMOs are convinced of their representation role in society and consequently share a strong ideological commitment to improve the cohesion of their movement and the experience of belonging and participation among their constituents. Derived from this, they want to involve their constituency to a large extent into the design, execution and evaluation of communicative action,

something that they could not easily do before the advent of the internet. At times, this goal even bordered utopian impulses, meaning they would believe they were ‘democratising’ the movement basis thanks to these actions. Besides their political radicalisation and ambivalent institutionalisation, with both NGOs and grassroots groups in the bunch, movement organisations following this path tended to be predominantly professionalised and manage a good wealth of monetary resources. When comparing both social movements under study, the analysis has found that this type of innovators consists predominantly of LGBTI+ SMOs, so only a third of them are environmental SMOs.

The second pathway of innovation is less ideological and more instrumental, and it is followed by a minority of innovative SMOs. In this other pathway, SMOs predominantly capitalised on the citizen support they could garner through hybrid media practices in order to increase their potential leverage on policy, legislation and institutional debates at the public level. Furthermore, these organisations found it stimulating to innovate because they wanted to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of their communication efforts, mainly by avoiding the duplication of costly efforts. SMOs following this path tended to be slightly more moderate politically and feature a highly hierarchical organisational structure –they were all NGOs, basically. Furthermore, except only one LGBTI+ SMO, these were all environmental organisations. Taking these two pathways into account, there is evidence that innovation among Chilean SMOs is driven by their ideological position and goals, and that it generally tends to unfold under favourable conditions in terms of resources and professional capacity. These organisations are for the most part the most stable in terms of resources in this research, but that is not always the case. There are seven resource-poorer SMOs who were innovators. This has an interesting implication about inventiveness. Inventiveness, along with the ambivalence of resources in general, placed communication goals at the forefront of the adoption of hybrid media practices.

Emulators are considered as late-adopter SMOs that copy others, and thus come second in the process of development of new hybrid media practices. They tended to play a validation and indirectly expansive role when copying what other leading SMOs have done in their field, but were not really aware that they

played this role. At the empirical level, these organisations' narrative about how and why they used hybrid media practices was less straightforward; for example, they could not explain in a clear manner how they have combined different media platforms and invented new media practices, and have not referred in this research to the gains associated to these innovations. Simply put, they did not talk about hybrid media practices from a consistent consequentialist logic. This lack of reflection did not automatically mean they did not adopt and reshape media practices though; in fact, evidence from their social media platforms has shown that they have adopted a few hybrid media practices. Therefore, emulation entails an exploitation of existing opportunities rather than an exploration of new ones. The real reason for them to do so lies in their visibility goals: They seem to be driven to imitate what most SMOs do today. Even if they may have intuited that these new practices were adopted because they were effective in some regard, this interpretation was made without evidence and simply mattered less than looking current and appropriate to their activist context. In this line, emulators exhibited a strong tendency towards political moderation and institutionalisation, but a less stable financial situation and professionalisation than innovators, a combination that could likely explain their concerns about legitimacy. Without enough resources, for the most part, emulators have not been able to invest in research and development (R&D), which according to the existing literature is the backbone of innovation.

Non-adopters were those few environmental SMOs in this study that resisted the adoption of hybrid media practices simply because they have shown reluctance to use, blend and repurpose conventional media practices. Fundamentally, this resistance is explained by their disinterest in interacting with a broad range of publics for visibility reasons. Instead, they were keen on working with niche groups, preferring private and even confidential settings and face-to-face interactions to media publicity of any kind. This does not mean that all media platforms and outlets were dismissed but rather used very specifically and in quite conventional ways. Similar to innovation, resistance is however not homogeneous across all organisations; there are two pathways. One ideological pathway is followed by radical and resource-poor SMOs whose main goal is to build their movement community only, for which reaching both bystanders and

decision-makers is irrelevant. Another pathway is followed by one reformist and well-funded ENGO focused mainly on direct lobbying, and who has expressed no interest in interacting with constituents or ensuring inclusiveness. Despite these differences, non-adopters share a generalised lack of built capacity to blend media practices in sophisticated ways. This lack of professionalisation is informed by a lack of interest in this type of communication in the first place. This is a key point that marks a difference from innovators and emulators; since non-adopters often operate away from the public attention, there are fewer incentives for them to either take a leadership role within the movement or to appear appropriate to their context.

Besides the three quite different SMO reactions to hybrid media practices or forms of engagement with today's media ecology, the research has also found important differences in the media practices of the two movements under study. The Chilean environmental movement has not adapted to a changing media ecology to the same extent than the LGBTI+ movement. In fact, the LGBTI+ movement has played an 'innovator' role in the development and spread of new media practices, while the environmental movement is torn between factions that copy new media practices and others that resist them. First, innovators reflect the vast majority of LGBTI+ SMOs but represent only a small fraction of environmental organisations. Secondly, two-thirds of the innovators following an ideological pathway are LGBTI+ SMOs, whereas in contrast virtually all innovators following an instrumental pathway are environmental SMOs. Finally, non-adopters have been found only in the environmental movement and not in the LGBTI+ activist network in Chile. It is argued that political divisions, geographical dispersion and resource unbalances are the three main factors explaining this key variation between conceptually similar movements.

Specifically, political radicalisation and resource inequality explain in part why the environmental movement has engaged less with media practice innovation. This movement is divided by ideological radicalisation and clashing values; some factions were interested in an open exchange of ideas within civil society, while others sought to make their territorial conflicts visible at any cost, with or without their constituency on board. Further to this, a niche faction

focused solely on maintaining their close-knit communities. The movement thus encompasses two opposite but valid forms of action, strategic reformism and disruptive anti-capitalism, which in turn explains differing levels of commitment to citizen participation and horizontal decision-making. The movement is also disconnected by the geographical dispersion of its activists, and it is unequal in terms of resource distribution. This translates into a weak ground for diffusion of innovations across organisations and unbalanced access to media representation and technological sophistication. As noted earlier, only ten per cent of the IT industry is based in regions of Chile. Thus, these divisions tended to reduce the number of organisations able to innovate in the field of hybrid media practices, and kept many SMOs isolated from the rest of the movement, deepening their resistance attitudes in such isolation. In this regard, there is a symbolic distance along with the physical one described above, meaning detachment from cross-organisational learning processes. In addition, some SMOs, having a virtual but not consistent contact with others, and a more limited spectrum of the media ecology to be explored, have ended up copying what their peers have done with their websites and social media instead of consciously investing in innovation.

The LGBTI+ movement, in contrast, defined itself as highly participatory in relation to its constituency and virtually all its organisations felt committed to this principle. Most of these SMOs also defined themselves as a unified front when it comes to policy advocacy. A common set of values and more ideological moderation –as opposed to the internal divisions characterising the Chilean environmental movement– produced favourable conditions for SMOs to explore their hybrid media ecology and develop new practices. Moreover, the movement is relatively balanced in terms of resources, with few tensions over power. Further to this, it is highly centralised as its core is based in the country's Metropolitan area instead of being dispersed across regions. Both cultural and structural homogeneity have promoted cross-organisational diffusion of practices, while the consolidation of networks and regular encounters allow SMOs to benefit from the communication strategies developed by other organisations. Ultimately, cohesion strengthened their ability to reach consensus in relation to human rights, which stand as an example of cross-organisational learning in the use of the media. Considering the above points, the thesis concludes that even if

these two post-materialist movements appear to be very similar in the surface, there are key cultural and structural differences between them in Chile. These differences should not be overlooked as they help indicate the influence of the sociopolitical context on SMOs' media praxis.

In conclusion, up to this point this introductory chapter presented the main focus of the thesis, its research question and aims, all in connection with empirical processes of mediated activism taking place in the world as well as overarching debates in the existing literature. It has outlined the chief argument of this investigative work in relation to these questions. This argument has posited that nearly all Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs created new media practices, which was motivated by their willingness to expand and diversify their reach, and encourage their constituents to participate more directly in their communicative efforts. This study's findings indicate a strong continuity of conventional media practices, which SMOs blend with new technologies, routines and contents in often unexpected ways until producing new 'hybrid' media practices. But the development of new media practices has many caveats as it does not unfold in a wholesale manner. It varies due to the specific organisational response that an SMO has in relation to the process, which is presented as a first form of differentiation in this study. Innovators are those SMOs that steer the creation process for clear objectives. Emulators are SMOs that follow the lead of innovators for appropriateness reasons; since emulation is imperfect and highly contextual, emulators often end up expanding innovations they have adopted. This role certainly may have some implications in the process of increasing normalisation of certain hybrid media practices over time. Finally, non-adopters are those SMOs that have opted for 'old-fashioned' conventionalism, and therefore stand against the changes in their environment.

The thesis has also unveiled an important contrast between environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs, which suggests that the nature of SMOs and the movement where these are subsumed to play an important role in shaping media practices. The Chilean environmental movement is less prone to innovate due to many symbolic and material divisions and inequalities, whereas the LGBTI+ movement is highly innovative due to its levels of cohesion, centralisation and networking.

However, most of the richest Chilean environmental SMOs did not invent new media practices, whereas humbler LGBTI+ organisations managed to be much more innovative. In consideration of these differences, the thesis's findings have implied that creating new media practices requires above all a great deal of inventiveness and not only resources and professionalisation. It means that sophisticated combinations and repurposing of conventional media practices is in theory an activity that would demand extensive resources, simply because organisational innovation required investment in R&D. However, in practice it seems perfectly possible in more precarious conditions because what matters the most is the willingness of SMOs to reach a more complex communication approach towards their different publics and goals. To reiterate this point, the research found that not all innovators have necessarily faced optimal financial conditions, and that half of the emulators have had stable budgets. In addition, non-adopters have rejected deeper engagements with today's changing media ecology regardless of their income situation, simply because they have not opened themselves towards a diverse array of publics.

### **1.3. Main outline of the thesis**

The thesis will proceed according to the following structure: Chapter 2 presents a critical literature review of the scholarship on the relationship between social activism and the media. Specifically, it will discuss a large body of research on social movements, political communication, activist media and NGOs, to then explore an emerging research programme on activist media practices and hybrid media ecology which is situated at the crossroads of the above bodies. This review will identify the main contributions and gaps within each of these bodies and the overarching debates in order to develop the thesis's research question. It will then discuss some aspects of neo-institutional organisational theory in order to generate a conceptual framework to be applied to the study of SMOs' organisational responses to new media practices in particular. Chapter 3 sets out research approach, case selection and methodological design used to address the thesis's research question. First, it will outline and justify the informed and pragmatic grounded theory approach chosen to investigate the research topic. Then it will build a rationale for the selection of Chile as a research context and

two post-materialist movements –environmental and LGBTI+ movements– for case comparison. Finally, the chapter will provide transparency as to how the research process was carried out, including an explanation of the fieldwork experiences in Chile, interviewing with SMOs’ representatives, collection of relevant documents and analysis and triangulation procedures.

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 present the empirical findings of the research by using interview material in triangulation with the assessment of documents, website content and social media usage among the sampled SMOs. Chapter 4 addresses the first part of the research question by drawing out the general patterns in the creation of new media practices. It analyses the process by which SMOs create new media practices and identifies four different types of practices that have been developed. It then draws out the most general reasons for SMOs to do so. Chapter 5 takes a step further in the analysis by comparing the different organisational responses that SMOs have had to new media practices, as well as the reasons and structural conditions that help explain these different reactions. Finally, Chapter 5 brings together both movements for a comparative analysis to elucidate relevant differences between environmental and LGBT+ activism in Chile, and account for the explanatory factors behind these differences. Chapter 7 explains the key conclusions of the thesis and draws out its main theoretical contributions. It makes a comparison of the general and specific reasons for SMOs to create new media practices and reflects on their different organisational responses and movement identities in relation to a global appraisal of factors: goals, ideology, organisational structure, resources and capabilities. The chapter further examines the implications of these findings at the theoretical and empirical level and acknowledges some of the limitations of this thesis, proposing avenues of further research.

## **Chapter 2. Critical review of the literature: SMOs, activist media practices and innovation**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter aims to review existing literatures on the relationship between social activism and media in order to situate the thesis in specific debates about social movement organisations (SMOs) and media practices. According to the parameters of informed grounded theory (IGT), the review will build a set of key themes from the literature to be used in creative and flexible ways to design the thesis' methodology, and develop an analytical framework for chapters 4, 5, 6. After assessing various bodies of research, the chapter argues that some aspects of the overall topic deserve closer examination. These gaps feed into the formulation of this thesis' research question: In what ways and for what reasons have SMOs created new media practices in a rapidly changing media ecology, and why have these practices varied across different SMOs?

The chapter has two main sections. The first part will trace the evolution of the study of social activism and media over time. It will first identify the two most important literatures that approached this topic: social movement theory and political communication research. After discussing their contributions and shortcomings, the section will argue that both have faced internal disjunctions and have only rarely been connected with one another. These divisions have generated a binary understanding of SMOs' media practices. Social movement scholars have paid little attention to the media and have been divided into two strands, one focused on the news coverage of contentious episodes' and another on movements' use of their own media to construct collective frames, discourse and identities. Political communication authors have in turn over-emphasised the role of the media over the structural and cultural conditions required to yield activist communication processes. These studies have generally treated 'old' and 'new' media as separate objects of study, despite empirical evidence that computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been relevant for decades and has not dismantled traditional media. In response to these gaps, some authors have positioned themselves at the crossroads of both literatures and

coined the concepts of 'media practices' and 'hybrid media ecology' to study today's forms of mediated activism (Chadwick, 2013; Jeppesen et al., 2014; Mattoni & Treré, 2014; Rodríguez, 2016). This emerging field has proposed, first, to acknowledge the features of the media landscape in which activists are situated today, where different types of media coexist and converge. Secondly, it has challenged the idea of activists as passive objects of media representation and explored their 'agency' when using different media. This scholarship has also examined the effects that given media practices have had on activists' organisation and discourse. However, despite a number of insights, this approach is more descriptive than explanatory and has for the most part described activist experiences in the Global North, with little reference to other contexts.

The second section will review organisational theory as a complementary literature. Consulting this literature was prompted by earlier findings which required more understanding of the different ways in which SMOs created new media practices, and their various reasons to do so. Organisational theory is not fully connected with political communication but has found some synergies with social movement theory, particularly in relation to the diffusion of action repertoires. This theory, in amalgamation with social movements and media studies, seemed crucial to explore the thesis' topic because the research process in Chile made evident that SMOs did not react in the same way to their media ecology. Some reacted faster than others, being aware of why they created new media practices, whereas others were reluctant to stop using conventional practices. This is something that media practices researchers have not yet approached. Organisational theory, in turn, has argued that SMOs learn from cues in their environment, and use that information to explore new practices. The concept of innovation advanced by this literature will thus be explained in this section and used in the thesis to understand the creation of new media practices and the different responses of SMOs to this process.

## **2.2. The study of the relationship between social activism and media**

This section explores three main bodies of literature in order to situate the thesis in current scholarly debates shedding light on mediated activism. The bodies to be examined are social movement theory and political communication

research. It aims to explain why existing literature has been insightful but still insufficient to address the thesis' research question, and how persisting gaps have motivated the thesis' approach. The section argues that social movement literature only paid attention to the media after its culturalist turn in the 1990s. It focused on activists' creation of editorial, broadcasting and online spaces for the collective construction of claims, frames, identities and discourses, without much attention to movements' impact on the media agenda. More recently, the focus has shifted to the role of CMC in the formation of national and transnational movement networks. Political communication scholars have been in turn too media-centric in their analysis of NGO publicity strategies and digitally enabled protest waves, which has raised criticism in the discipline. Facing internal divisions and being separate from each other, these two bodies have been useful but limited to understand how and why new media practices are created due to the action of SMOs. They have tended to focus on movement networks or organisations as two separate categories, and treat 'older' and 'newer' media as two stages of activist communication. An emerging literature, at the crossroads of the two aforementioned bodies, defined here as 'media hybridity' literature, has addressed these limitations by exploring movements' media practices and interactions with a complex media ecology, but mainly in light of spontaneous 'leaderless' mobilisation in mature democracies. In what follows, the section will discuss each of these bodies of literature in detail.

### **2.2.1. Social movement theories and their (limited) approach to the media**

Social movements have been a distinct object of study since the 1960s and their analysis has approached social activism as a very important aspect. More than five decades of consistent study has produced a landscape of different theories, which have all focused on the importance of mobilisation for societal change but have disagreed on some aspects. A North American strand has focused on the resources, opportunity structures and institutionalisation required for movements to coalesce, sustain themselves over time and influence politics and society (Eisinger, 1976; Friedman & McAdam, 1992; Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; Kitschelt, 1986; McAdam, 1982; 1986; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Meyer, 1999; 2004; Morris, 1984; Oberschall, 1973; Tarrow, 1998; Tilly, 1978). Another strand developed originally in Europe, and highly influential in the US, prompted a turn

towards constructivism or in the 1980s. It paid attention to movements' cultural and emotional sustainability and their impact on discourse (Ferree, 2003; Jasper, 1997; 1998; 2011; Klandermans, 1997; Kriesi, 2004; Melucci, 1988; 1996; Polletta, 2008; Santos, 2013; Staggenborg & Lang, 2007; Stromberg, 1981; Swidler, 1986). These strands were not opposites but involved a different way of looking at similar questions about movements' emergence, expansion and impact.

The 'culturalist' turn soon permeated part of the debate in the US and as a result some scholars began to examine the construction and diffusion of collective action frames (Benford, 1997; Benford & Snow, 2000; Gamson, 1992; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 2016; Snow et al., 1986; 1986; Snow & Benford, 1988). Up to this point, tensions between resource and constructivist views of movements were the most overarching debates in this literature. By the 1990s, many authors tried to reach more holistic explanations of social movements by synthesising the reasoning of both strands of literature (Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Kriesi et al., 1992; McAdam et al., 1996; McAdam & Rucht, 1993). This synthesis swung the pendulum back to the structure of social movement research, only that this time incorporating the lessons drawn from constructivism. As reaching back more structural traditions, most recently social movement theorists have drawn on ideas from the discipline of network analysis to examine the formation, stability and decay of broad movement networks both at the national and transnational levels (Davies, 2012; Diani, 2000; 2007; Diani & McAdam, 2003; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Koopman, 2015; Passy, 2003; Uitermark & Nicholls, 2012). This research has paid particular attention to the complex assemblage of different international advocacy organisations, local movement organisations and individual activists that coordinate collective action territorially (Cox, 2008; Gillan et al., 2008; Koopman, 2015) and connective action digitally (Bakardjieva, 2015; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Lim, 2013), which has been the most recent development in this strand of literature.

Some of the above literatures have given more emphasis to the relationship between social activism and media than others, but by and large the broad discipline has taken some time to recognise the importance of the media in the organisation, visibility and influence of movements. The earliest social

movement studies, focused on mass behaviour observed in Europe during the three-quarters of the 20th century, barely touched upon this topic in particular. Situated before the explosion of post-materialist activism in the 1960s, early students of collective action considered it a spontaneous, irrational response of people to structural grievances over scarce resources (Gurr, 1970; 1980; Le Bon, 1913; Smelser, 1963; Turner & Killian, 1987). This was crucial to identify the importance of deprivation as a socio-psychological aspect of mobilisation, but it struggled to move beyond rumours and manipulative propaganda as main communication channels for collective action (Smelser, 1963).

In response to the study of mass behaviour, a new generation of sociologists in the US formulated the resource-mobilisation theory (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; McAdam et al., 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1973; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Oberschall, 1973). The rational choice theory developed by Olson (1965: 51-60) explained collective action as the sum of individual cost-benefit calculations and it was the main source of inspiration for resource-mobilisation theorists. They questioned the fact that the sole existence of deprivation would explain the sustained and instrumental nature of new Civil Rights movements. Deprivation was taken as ubiquitous in this regard (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977). In turn, they explained that social movements sustain themselves thanks to the existence of material resources, such as money, facilities, jobs and membership, and the organised use of them for mobilisation (McCarthy & Zald, 1977: 1216). The approach also included trust, habits, moral commitments, friendship, and the networks these helped create, in the list of resources necessary to organise collective action (Oberschall, 1973: 28). Despite their arguably excessive focus on the resource aspects of mobilisation (Buechler, 1993; Rucht, 1990), one of the main contributions of this approach was its conceptualisation of SMOs.

In their attempt to challenge an interpretation of movements as irrational masses, these authors started paying attention to the unifying structure that makes possible to mobilise people (Tilly, 1978). Resource-mobilisation theorists argued that social movements were not fully mobilised until reaching certain level of resource aggregation, minimal coordination and visibility (McCarthy & Zald, 1977: 1216-1221). Due to their role in fundraising, cost reduction,

creation of strategies and professionalisation, they conceived SMOs as key structural aspects of social movements (McCarthy, 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Under this view, SMOs were highly competitive organisations that would cluster together and form ‘social movement fields’ in order to improve their recruitment and mobilisation results (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). This view was useful, but many argued too instrumental to capture the real complexity of movement coordination. Consequently, years later a revised model proposed that SMOs were mobilising structures with different degrees of formalisation. Moreover, it inserted SMOs in broader networks, which became a central part of the literature in the 1980s and today has regained new momentum due to the attention to online activism practices (Koopman, 2015). This helped situate SMOs as one category among many movement group categories within larger networks. SMOs have become the most recognisable of all these categories of movement groups, often hierarchically arranged, aligned with their movement’s goals and helpful in aggregating support and resources (Andrews & Caren, 2010; Buechler, 1993; Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Smith, 1998; Tilly & Tarrow, 2007).

The blurry distinction between SMOs and other collective actors such as interest groups and NGOs has long been a matter of debate among scholars, especially as the latter are often part of social movements (Burstein, 1999; Scott, 1990). These overlap because both are defined as civil society organisations and tend to centre their action on political advocacy (Della Porta & Caiani, 2009; Scaramuzzino et al., 2011). What seems to distinguish SMOs from other organisations is the level of radicalism they put in their exchanges with authorities (Tilly, 1984: 305). In this regard, SMOs are therefore a particular manifestation of NGOs that are part of a movement and consequently are focused on changing the status quo (Smith, 2013). This is important because NGOs can also be less radical and closer to interest groups. This is a highly contextual matter since in regions other than Europe SMOs may be thriving more.

Additionally, a process of ‘NGOisation’ of movements has dominated the political scene across the Global South for years (Jad, 2007; Kaldor, 2003a; Lang, 2012; Paternotte, 2015). In this process, social movements have had to structure themselves towards professionalised, institutionalised and bureaucratic forms in

order to access resources, legitimise their voice and overcome repression (Lang, 2012: 95). Simply put, NGOisation would derive from the complex cooperation between NGOs and social movements. One of the most visible effects of stronger NGOised footprints is the emergence of hybrid organisations that exhibit traits of both NGOs and SMOs, making these two eventually undistinguishable (Lang, 2012: 95). NGOised movement also tend to switch their repertoires from activism to advocacy, which diversifies the composition of broader movements (Lang, 2012: 95). This process has been particularly salient in Latin America, which ultimately has made blurrier the boundaries between NGOs and SMOs (Álvarez et al., 1998; Álvarez, 2009).

Slightly overlapped with resource-mobilisation theory, another line of study known as the political process theory or political opportunity structure (POS) approach was developed to help explain social movements' sustainability in relation to institutions. This strand moved the attention from individual structures to systemic variables that create both opportunities and constraints for successful collective action, such as citizen engagement and elite support (Eisinger, 1976; McAdam et al., 1996; Tarrow, 2012; Tilly, 1978). They explored how movements can receive the support of elites, whose involvement may facilitate openings in the political domain to have direct influence on institutions (Eisinger, 1976: 163-164; Tilly, 1978: 53-84). Depending on the state response, social movements can also innovate in their tactics to be more influential (McAdam, 1982; Scott, 1990; Tilly, 2004). Of particular interest for this thesis is the POS approach's conceptualisation of 'repertoires of contention', which were defined as specific strategies of collective action employed by movements ranging from extra-institutional confrontation to performance and lobbying (Martin, 2015; Tilly & Tarrow, 2007).

In relation to mediated activism, the resource-mobilisation approach treated the media as part of the resources on hands of SMOs to gain visibility and set the public agenda (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; Oberschall, 1978). They tended to explain well why SMOs would require monetary resources in order to produce activist media such as print posters and flyers, and 'constituents' —those who adhere to the goals of the movement and provide resources to SMOs— to create

slogans (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Tilly, 1978). The news media were also interpreted as resources for SMOs to publicise their campaigns among constituents and potential adherents (McAdam, 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). But they barely addressed why they wanted to create these media in the first place, or why garnering the attention of the news media was of relevance. Similarly, POS researchers addressed the invention of new 'channels of activist communication' in the context of SMOs compelled to address decision-makers, which was useful to understand that movements were engaging with the media (Tarrow, 1998). However, this idea did not explore how invention unfolds and why 'new' channels would be required to establish connections with elites for support or contention.

In response to the structuralist and systemic agenda that dominated the analysis of social movements in the 1960s and 1970s, a cluster of European scholars developed a common constructivist programme in the 1980s. They were focused on bringing back the 'grievances' dimension overlooked after years of analysis of resources, opportunities and strategies, but paying attention to how these grievances were socially constructed. This was known as a 'culturalist turn' in the study of social movements, which included the analysis of framing and then continued towards collective identity, discourse and emotions (Martin, 2015: 122). Under this view, social movements were culturally oriented actors involved in social conflict whose goals and strategies had certain social rationality (Touraine, 1985).

Emphasising the importance of people's perceptions for the organisation of collective action, the framing approach was the US-based version of the culturalist turn, developed by Gamson (1990; 1992) and Snow et al. (2000; 1986) in the second half of the 1980s. This perspective argued that what explained the sustainability of challenging collective action was the alignment of frames among movement bases (Snow et al., 1986: 478). Frames were defined as cognitive devices that rendered certain events as meaningful, and this meaning organised experience and guided both individual and collective action (Snow et al., 1986: 464). According to this approach, SMOs and networks devised political awareness among constituents. They could intervene in this process by

developing collective action frames composed by moral indignation, agency or the possibility of altering existing conditions, and identity or position respecting specific opponents (Gamson, 1992). Frame alignment was in this context the congruence between SMOs' activities, goals and ideology, and individuals' interests, values and beliefs (Snow et al., 1986).

While the media have been treated by POS authors as one of many structural factors conditioning social movements' sustainability, the introduction of cultural dimensions to the analysis of social movements changed this to an extent. Media platforms and outlets became more central among framing scholars in the US and discourse analysts in Europe. Their attention to framing alignment and communication between SMOs and constituents has usefully explored the role of the media in these processes. Framing authors explained that the process of linking ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames across SMOs and people requires exchanges of information via interpersonal networks and technologies (Snow et al., 1986: 476). Consequently, the framing approach added a discursive dimension to the use of the media, along with more strategic uses aimed at visibility and fundraising.

The historical reluctance of social movement theorists to incorporate the media in their study of SMOs came to an end at this time, as various authors began to collaborate with the political communication community (Earl et al., 2015; Kriesi, 2004; Meyer, 1995). Some authors published in political communication journals and have in turn invited media experts to participate in their editions about social movements. The most burgeoning of these collaborations has occurred in the field of framing, partly because this conceptual tool was originally developed by communication theorists and applied to a range of disciplines, ranging from international relations to social movements (Meyer, 1995). The most clear-cut example of this synergy was a strand of literature focused on media outlets produced by activists in the context of social movements, which has been called 'alternative' (Atton, 2002) 'radical' (Downing, 2001) or 'citizen' (Rodríguez, 2001) media studies.

These studies constitute a specific strand of literature that has paid particular attention to activists' production of zines, community radio stations

and websites, among other outlets, to bypass the mainstream news media and circulate pertinent and unfiltered information to their movement (Atton, 2003; Downing, 2001). They have not explored the why activists need to ‘craft’ their own media outlets –it seems relatively self-explanatory in the context of dissent– but also the consequences that their production has had on the experiences of belonging to a social movement. In this regard, these authors have found how the production of radical media against policies and power structures has engaged activists in processes of horizontal and participatory communication (Atton, 2010; Rodríguez, 2003). Downing (2001) thus concluded in his extensive study of movement media that ultimately the generation of different forms of alternative media outlets is used for community-building. This literature was heavily informed by the culturalist postulates that began to permeate the analysis of social movements in the 1990s and 2000s. Within this strand, a group of authors explored ‘citizen journalism’, which in short has been defined as the spontaneous and amateurish reporting of events by ordinary people using CMC platforms (Rodríguez & Miralles, 2014). Studies have been documented how this content is picked up by internet users and professional journalists who have adapted to the phenomenon by increasingly encouraging citizens’ submission of ‘mobile footage’ (Allan & Thorsen, 2009; Reich, 2008).

In summary, the literature on social movements has remained relatively independent from political communication and media studies, despite the fact that these disciplines share similar concerns about claim-making and influence, and a few collaborations have taken place (Earl et al., 2015: 362). From a rational choice perspective, one of the main lessons drawn from social movement theorists’ approach to mediation is the importance of news media coverage for SMOs to influence public opinion and the agenda of decision-makers (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). From a culturalist perspective, another lesson is the importance of alternative media outlets and more recently CMC platforms for activists to participate in discussions, negotiate and frame meaning and build collective identities (Atton, 2003; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 2016; Swidler, 1986). The above claims immediately set out an important division between a strategic understanding of movement organisations in relation to the

mainstream news media, and an emotional understanding of spontaneous grassroots networks in relation to CMC.

This section ultimately argues that a historical reluctance to address mediation dominates the analysis of social movements, which has resulted in an artificial division between ‘older’ and ‘newer’ media and between strategy and social expression. This last dichotomy becomes apparent when observing the opposition between ‘strategic action fields’ (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011) and ‘discursive fields of action’ (Álvarez, 2009) in recent studies of SMOs. The truth is that both concepts refer to a fairly similar process: The substantive interaction between action-oriented groups that leads to the creation of a social order between them (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011). All these divisions have made it hard to understand the relation of social activism and media in its complexity. There is no reason to assume that all SMOs will be strategic by default, as much of the resource-mobilisation has done so. One of the main reasons for social movement scholars to fall into these simplifications was their excessive attention to the media as structures and not as processes of mediation. There is an underlying assumption in this literature that people will learn about movements, how to participate in them or find resonance with their ideas just because there were some leading individuals and groups producing resonant frames and receiving media coverage (Earl et al., 2015: 362). This has to do with the discipline’s historical reluctance to explore how movement activists interact with different media platforms and outlets. This last gap has been in fact addressed by political communication researchers, which is a second large body of literature that has related social activism with the media.

### **2.2.2. Activism and NGOs from the perspective of political communication**

The relation between social activism and media has not only been approached by social movement scholars but also –and to a greater extent– by political communication researchers. Political communication is a field of political science developed mostly in the US and the UK, which has focused on the processes of mediated information exchange between political actors and the public for the purposes of persuasion (Canel & Sanders, 2012; Rudd & Connew, 2017). The advent of the Web 2.0 has introduced important changes to the field

(Chadwick, 2014: 54), yet the focus on electoral campaigns and government communication has persisted with key studies on the transformative effects of social media and mobile applications both on campaigners (Anstead & Chadwick, 2008; Bimber, 2014; Hamajoda, 2016) and voters (Bode, 2015; Woolley et al., 2010). An example of this is the significant amount of research on Obama's digital campaigns (Bimber, 2014; Cogburn & Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011).

This focus has been the mainstream trend in political communication, but there has also been a parallel strand developed with a focus on civil society (Bruycker & Beyers, 2015; Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Manning, 2001; Thrall, 2006). Although niche at first, this strand has examined organisations and their communication and PR strategies, applying many of the concepts already used to study governments, parties and campaigns. Some of these studies have focused on interest groups, which are an institutionalised form of civil society organisation of high relevance in the US (Bruycker & Beyers, 2015; Terkildsen et al., 2010; Thrall, 2006). This research has examined the reasons why interest groups need news media attention, concluding that media prominence is relevant for them as an 'outsider strategy' to influence policy debates when they lack direct access to decision-makers (Bruycker & Beyers, 2015; Kollman, 1998: 11-12) and to raise awareness among relevant publics about specific group interests to eventually change policy (Berry, 1984: 143; 1984). The outcome of interest groups' attempts to garner news media coverage has also been assessed, revealing that journalists tend to pay more attention to oppositional policy positions (Bruycker & Beyers, 2015), but often follow certain professional norms regardless of groups' efforts and competition for their interest (Terkildsen et al., 2010). One of the most important lessons drawn from this literature is that inequity across interest groups matters for the analysis: wealthier groups will receive more coverage and be portrayed better than poorer groups, which has called into question the myth of the success of 'outsider strategies' that has tended to dominate the academic debate on civil society in the US (Thrall, 2006).

Political communication researchers have typically approached NGOs in a similar manner to interest groups. NGOs are however notoriously difficult to define. Article 71 of the United Nations Charter has broadly defined them as

legally registered non-profit and voluntary bodies independent from government control (Davies, 2014; Lang, 2012; Powers, 2015a). Yet, this definition can apply to a wide range of different voluntary organisations, which makes some boundaries very unclear. It has become particularly challenging to distinguish NGOs from SMOs as researchers often come upon a multitude of self-proclaimed NGOs when carrying out their projects (Lang, 2012: 10). In fact, a number of non-formalised movement groups in this study have called themselves NGOs during the interviewing process, which will be explored in detail in the sampling section of the next chapter. Scholars have thus tried to distinguish grassroots activism at the local level from nongovernmental sector at the national and international levels (Lang, 2012: 11). But for practical reasons, many researchers have ended up treating the former as a highly institutionalised form of SMO. This research will be based on this practical conceptualisation of NGOs as professionalised SMOs. All in all, this is consistent with a Latin American interpretation of civil society in particular, which tends to differ notably from how the NGO sector has been defined and described in the Global North (Álvarez et al., 1998; McPherson, 2016)

However, the above overlap between NGOs and SMOs has not been constructed for the case of interest groups in the literature. Arguments have been made about the blurry boundaries between interest groups and NGOs, as both share hierarchical organisation and high level of professionalisation, as well as an attempt to influence policy and form alliances with governments and authorities (Baur, 2011b: xv). Nevertheless, these are structural and procedural dimensions that represent only one level of comparison. At the substantive level, NGOs also construct claims of societal change and struggle for legitimacy, which align them with activists and social movements (Baur, 2011b: 120). Furthermore, a growing number of NGOs has focused on service provision rather than trying to influence policy (Corrales, 2017; Lang, 2012; Uldam & Vestergaard, 2015). In contrast, interest groups do not pursue a common good but rather the specific interests of their membership for which they engage in direct lobbying more than any other course of action, and also they do not offer services to the population they represent (Powers, 2015a: 428).

The analysis of NGOs' political communication has gone through many phases. The two most salient ones are the long-standing interest in NGO-journalists relations and PR efforts (Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Dai et al., 2017; Jacobs & Glass, 2002; Manning, 2001; McPherson, 2016; Moon, 2016; Powers, 2014; 2016; van Leuven & Joye, 2014; Waisbord, 2011), and the relatively new attention to their use of websites and social media to digitalise their campaigns (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009; Burt & Taylor, 2000; Hestres, 2017; Saxton & Wang, 2014; Waters, 2007; Waters et al., 2009; Waters & Jamal, 2011; Weyker, 2002; Zorn et al., 2013). In both cases, the literature has tended to treat NGOs as goal-oriented organisations that use the media strategically; in this sense, this resembles the study of interest groups. As a consequence, it has mostly focused on evaluating the performance of NGOs' media strategies by retrieving data from staff, members and donors, but only sporadically from their beneficiaries, which along with potential donors, is a crucial target audience of these strategies and could reveal significant information about performance.

Scholars began paying increasing attention to the relationship between NGOs and the mainstream news media in the 2000s. Most studies have concentrated on the publicity strategies used by NGOs to improve their newsmaking prospects (Jacobs & Glass, 2002; McPherson, 2016; Powers, 2016; van Leuven & Joye, 2014; Waisbord, 2011), and some other studies have looked at the impacts of adapting their goals to the logic of the news media (Dai et al., 2017; Manning, 2001; Waisbord, 2011). This vast literature has shown that NGOs want news media publicity for influence and sustainability. More specifically, they seek to raise awareness about certain policy positions in order to influence elite discussions (Benthall, 1993; Powers, 2015b; 2016) and/or garner public support, often in the form of membership and donations (van Leuven & Joye, 2014). These distinctions matter because NGOs seek more than one type of publicity, and therefore set out different audience orientations and communication strategies (Dai et al., 2017). This research has made evident that some NGOs seek to approach political elites –including policy-makers and lobbyists– to gain press coverage because this is where these elites learn about advocacy demands (Dai et al., 2017; Powers, 2014; 2016). Conversely, other NGOs want to reach mass audiences for fundraising and educational purposes,

for which they try to attract the broadcast media because potential donors use these media to learn about political organisations and their causes (Dai et al., 2017; Powers, 2014; 2016). In all these cases, one of the main lessons is that NGO action is often ignored or poorly reported in the news media (Lang, 2012: 9).

Further to examining how NGOs seek news media attention, the literature has examined the strategies they pursue for doing so. Studies indicate that NGOs compete for journalistic attention in a strategic manner, for which they favour specific tactics such as press releases, PR and advertising (McPherson, 2016; Moon, 2016; van Leuven & Joye, 2014). In this regard, journalists seem to be covering NGOs not because of their disruptive actions as the protest paradigm would suggest in relation to SMOs. Instead, media coverage would follow on from NGOs' professionalisation of media service, which implies: timely reaction to journalists' queries, production of research and commentary for the news media, and provision of expert sources on policy matters for news stories (Powers, 2015a; Waisbord, 2011). Therefore, in order to meet the standards of journalism and become legitimate sources, NGOs have to neutralise radical ideas and moderate their political position (Powers, 2015a; Waisbord, 2011).

Research also indicates that NGOs have to invest greatly in becoming more institutionalised, professionalised and networked to successfully compete for limited media attention and increase their credibility as authoritative sources in their issues (McPherson, 2016; Powers, 2015a). One example of this is the PR capacity required to recruit a celebrity as campaign spokesperson, which is often valued by journalists (Manning, 2001: 67). Similarly, specialised staff and library resources are crucial for carrying out independent research and publishing policy reports (Jacobs & Glass, 2002: 244), and a good financial situation is pivotal to fund reporting trips for news organisations (Conrad, 2014; Powers, 2015a). Ultimately, this means that well-funded and larger NGOs have more chances to influence the news agenda in their favour (Jacobs & Glass, 2002; Powers, 2014).

Scholars have mostly paid attention to NGO-journalist relations, but this has not been the only theme. Since 2010s a number of studies have examined NGOs' use of CMC platforms and adoption of newer technologies more generally. While arguments about media publicity strategies revolved around organisational

sustainability and effectiveness, arguments about CMC strategies have covered this along with adaptability, specifically technological competitiveness (Waters, 2007). At first, some researchers attempted to examine how CMC changed the NGO sector, concluding that a few were exploring new dialogic ways of interacting with their supporters and building communities on social media (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009; Burt & Taylor, 2000; Waters et al., 2009). However, further research found that the majority of NGOs were not making full use of the engagement and community-building potentials of Facebook and Twitter (Waters et al., 2009; Waters & Jamal, 2011). Instead, NGOs use social media and websites as a one-way mode of communication to deliver a large amount of information to their stakeholders, often in press release and research report formats (Lang, 2012; Powers, 2015a; 2015b; Waters & Jamal, 2011: 321; Weyker, 2002). These studies have attempted to show how this ‘broadcasting’ strategy has, in some cases, helped NGOs to mobilise support and resources. For example, findings show that CMC has become efficient to raise funds (Saxton & Wang, 2014; Zorn et al., 2013), organise petitions and rally (Kaldor, 2003a: 104-106).

Recent findings also demonstrate that NGOs –and SMOs as well– continue to use Facebook and Twitter for political mobilisation in order to engage people more substantively despite being aware of their technical limitations and security issues (Hestres, 2017; Mercea, 2011). This point has revealed that path-dependency and isomorphism patterns observed in the NGO-journalists relations (Powers, 2016) also have tended to apply for their use of CMC platforms (Scaramuzzino & Scaramuzzino, 2017). A large number of NGOs use social media because the NGO sector in which they are embedded has adopted them, without necessarily engaging in consequentialism as it would be expected regarding the interactive affordances of CMC.

Despite the increasing importance of CMC, and the uses presented above, Powers (2016) has concluded that NGO publicity strategies continue to focus heavily on the mainstream news media. This is a result of a ‘reinforcing path dependency’: they have accumulated the knowledge, grown the capacity and received the external stimuli to persist in conventional strategies (Powers, 2016: 491). This does not necessarily mean that NGOs have not explored new goals and

activities through CMC. Part of the issue is that researchers began to analyse online NGO data focusing on existing questions originally formulated to examine NGOs' news media publicity. These existing questions have revolved around broadcasting strategies to disseminate campaign information and mobilise resources to a large, general and unsegmented audience. As a result, a dominant question has been whether digital technologies will allow NGOs to bypass the news media and become news outlets themselves (Powers, 2015a; Russell, 2013; Waisbord, 2011). These types of questions have been applied to a context that requires a different approach given the interactive nature of CMC platforms.

Little research has been conducted about NGOs' internal changes after their move to CMC (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009), which again contrasts with the emphasis put on their transformations after adapting to the news media logic (Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Manning, 2001; Powers, 2015a). This is particularly problematic as there is a persistent rhetoric of participatory advocacy and beneficiaries' inclusiveness among many NGOs (Kareithi & Lund, 2012). Lang (2012) argues that the most salient source of NGO legitimacy is neither effectiveness nor policy expertise but rather public engagement, for which online interactivity may be of relevance for NGOs. In fact, the interactive affordances of social media could suit these 'symbolic' needs very well (Burt & Taylor, 2000), with some observed scenarios of greater dialogic engagement between NGOs and users on Facebook (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009). However, this has been mostly overlooked in the existing literature.

As outlined earlier in this chapter, political communication research into civil society began as a subfield focused mostly on organisations. The advent of the Web 2.0 moved part of this research agenda to NGOs' websites and social media accounts, as discussed above. However, the greatest impact was the generation of a new interest in decentralised protests and spontaneous, 'flash' movements (Earl, 2014). As people are increasingly using social media to seek information and express their opinion (Theocharis et al., 2014; Valenzuela, 2013), the amount of data to be collected from citizens has multiplied. This has opened a rich avenue of research on mobilisation in recent years. In connection with social movements, several studies have explored how citizens create and

consume activist or mobilising information online (Lomicky & Hogg, 2010; Theocharis et al., 2014), and organise and coordinate offline collective action (Farrell, 2012; Pickerill, 2003). But a large majority of these studies have concentrated on citizens' use of newer media as fora for empowerment, civic engagement and horizontal deliberation, often with ambivalent results (Dahlgren, 2005; Uldam & Vestergaard, 2015; Wells, 2015; Wojcieszak, 2009; Wright, 2015). This last strand has generally tended to dismiss the technical and security limitations of social media, and reduce the idea of political deliberation to real-time exchange of opinion online with no apparent effect on social change.

The findings described above about mobilisation, coordination of offline action and especially deliberation have prompted an overarching debate between techno-optimist and techno-sceptic positions in relation to the effects of social media on civil society dynamics (Zittel, 2004: 231-232). This debate became very visible during and after the cascading protest events in Arab nations between 2010 and 2012, a process known as the 'Arab Spring'. Techno-optimism —often called 'cyber-optimism'— was a utopian perspective held during the early 2000s that argued CMC would revolutionise civil society (Tarrow, 2014: 468). This perspective has been influenced by the work of Morris and Ogan (1996) and Negroponte (2000), who were pioneers in exploring the political changes triggered by increasing technological sophistication. Most of the techno-optimistic authors have examined the most salient cases of the Arab Spring — Tunisia and Egypt— to demonstrate a connection between the use of Facebook, Twitter and mobile phones and rebellions against authoritarian regimes at both the political and discursive level (Castells, 2012; Howard et al., 2011).

In contrast, techno-sceptics brought a more 'conservative' critique to the media-determinist approach of contemporary work on this topic (Tarrow, 2014: 468). They have questioned many assumptions about the effects of CMC on political change for being based on commentary and prognosis rather than actual data analysis (Aday et al., 2012: 11). Some sceptics have tried to bring the attention back to other forms of 'offline' communication such as assemblies and cultural camps (Ross, 2012; Saavedra, 2015). Others have tempered their conclusions according to what data show about digitally enabled activism: in

certain contexts CMC can facilitate unrest, but they do not really produce it (Harlow & Guo, 2014). Sceptics have been more pessimistic in their revision of certain claims, specifically those about CMC's role in democratisation (Fuchs, 2012; Hagen, 2000; Morozov, 2012; Warf, 2011). They have argued that 'technology fetishism' has distracted academics from seeing the reinforcing effects of CMC on established political structures (Fuchs, 2012), and to uncover the fallacy in attempts to transfer assumptions about Western media to other regions of the world (Morozov, 2012; Warf, 2011). After all, many claims have been based on extensive databases of social media use in countries where only a minority had real access to new technologies, due to digital illiteracy, repression and specially censorship (Aday et al., 2012; Morozov, 2009).

Broadly speaking, besides the above internal division, political communication has paid little attention to long-held conventional wisdoms about social movements. This means that for the most part there has been little dialogue between political communication research and social movement theories. In most cases, political communication has not engaged enough with conceptual tools from social movement theories such as political opportunity structures, collective identity and resource mobilisation. In this regard, when it comes to discussing digitally enabled activism, eminent social movement theorists have tended to situate themselves in the techno-scepticism approach discussed above. Koopmans (2004: 385) has brought the focus back to direct encounters between activists, opponents and decision-makers, as he considers it more significant than any mediated interaction in contentious action.

In a similar vein, political communication has tended to focus on each new 'hot' media technology of the moment, isolating this technology from previous ones, or its broader media context, and treating it as an independent variable that would explain changes in society and politics. This focus has casted a shadow over the human aspects of mobilisation processes and the effects of the socio-political context where the use of the media takes place. Tarrow (2014) and Kaun (2016) have argued that in fact new media have appeared before in modern history, often with deep impact on social movements, and each one of these medium has been considered faster in connecting people than the previous

ones. Tarrow (2014) has agreed that the main contribution of research on CMC and activism has been explaining how CMC has lowered the costs and risks of mobilising people, increased the speed message exchanges and expanded the reach of citizen participation in collective action. But this finding starts from the assumption that the more information the better, when actually information overload could have a negative effect on mobilisation. For example, Earl et al. (2015: 362) and Kreimer (2001: 142-143) have discussed the trends towards competition –as opposed to collaboration– between movement groups for scarce public attention in an information-saturated environment. What counts for mobilisation appears to be more than just the amount of information. This field thus comes up short when seeking to explain how people have rebelled against their institutions, and why they have resorted to computers and phones more than assemblies or unions to organise themselves in these contexts. Such a question is relevant to understand how activist groups communicate their messages in a more complex media environment, and their reasons to adopt new technologies if conventional strategies are still there. Is it because CMC is more effective for their goals, or is it because their goals have actually changed?

Another important gap in this literature is related to a binary division made between types of media. On the one hand, the study of civil society organisations has referred mostly to the mainstream news media. When it has addressed CMC, it has mostly focused on how this communication helps NGOs mobilise resources and publicise their campaigns, as if social media were plain broadcasting devices working similarly to older media. On the other hand, the study of spontaneous citizen demonstrations has over-emphasised CMC and mobile phones over the mainstream news media, which has alarmed many critics who argue that inequality issues and digital literacy gaps have remained overlooked despite their significance in Global South countries. Therefore, both strands of political communication have concentrated in one specific type of media without making broader comparisons with other existing media that could matter for social activism. Civil society organisations have been able to develop strategies to gain more news media publicity, and their levels of adaptability and resources influence greatly on their results (Powers, 2015a; 2016). Meanwhile, lacking formal opportunities to be portrayed in the news media,

grassroots groups have found cheaper and faster ways to engage in political activity on their computers and phones (Boulianne, 2009; Howard et al., 2011). This section concludes that this binary view is a simplistic way of looking at mediated activism, which tends to remove strategic power from grassroots groups and takes spontaneity and learning out from organisations. In this regard, are all NGOs fated to copy others and follow path dependencies? Or put another way, are all spontaneous movements coordinated online meant to be innovators?

In sum, following social movement theory, political communication has been another large body of research that has examined the relationship between media and social activism. It has built a number of overarching concepts to understand this relationship but has been limited in some regards. Similar to social movement theory, political communication has shown a lack of integration between research on organisations and spontaneous movements as well as some divisions within each strand. Viewing NGOs as strategic campaigners comparable to parties and for-profit corporations, the field has opened interesting questions about their instrumental use of the media, PR and marketing. However, this analysis has set aside these organisations' membership and constituency for the most part, especially in the context of NGOs' adoption of CMC platforms. Most likely in response to this, the subsequent focus on social uprisings and the role of CMC on mobilisation from 2010 and onwards made a 180 degrees turn, emphasising citizens over organisations and media over sociopolitical dynamics. As part of this thesis main argument, it is acknowledged that this turn was useful to build a much-needed narrative of how newer media technologies are used by citizens in emblematic cases of insurrection around the globe. Nevertheless, current debates between optimist and sceptics show the excessive attention that many gave to the media, flash mobilisation and spontaneity.

### **2.2.3. Emerging research on activist media practices and hybrid media ecology**

In response to the old-new, mainstream-alternative and organised-leaderless binaries reviewed in the previous sections, a number of scholars have explored an intersectional area between social movements and political communication. From the beginning, these authors found resonance with each other's work and an emerging research programme has been the result of this process. What all of

these studies within the so-called ‘hybrid turn’ literature have in common is the overarching argument that both mediated communication and social activism are better understood as hybrid forms of older and newer logics of communication. On the one hand, today’s media ecology is not regarded as dominated by conventional nor digital media, but by their convergence (Chadwick, 2013). On the other hand, movement groups are less centralised than before but still able to organise and coordinate action without hierarchical structures (Gerbaudo, 2012; Mercea & Yilmaz, 2018). At first, they were concerned about the impact of new technology on the structural organisation of movements. Bennett and Segerberg (2012; 2013) studied the Occupy movement and proposed their theory of ‘the logic of connective action’, which put networked communication at the centre of the analysis of social movements.

The theory of connective action contends that contentious politics is now divided into three categories along a spectrum of increasing intensity of digitally enabled communication and personalisation of citizen participation (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). The first category is ‘organisationally brokered collective action’, where NGOs play a crucial role in the coordination of large-scale action networks, and CMC platforms are used to mobilise people and manage their participation (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013: 46). The second is ‘organisationally enabled connective action’, where NGOs still play a key role but their constituents also participate in personalised ways, for the causes they want, thanks to the use of their own CMC platforms (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013: 48).

The third category is where the authors saw a big change in activism; they have called it ‘crowd enabled connective action’, where people have used CMC platforms to express personal action frames and motivate others without NGOs in the lead (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013: 46-48). In this form of action, people are less inclined to participate through formal organisations and closed to trade off some of their personal beliefs in order to be part of a movement (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). Instead, as Mercea and Yilmaz (2018) have demonstrated later, participants of decentralised movement networks recourse to a symbolic membership, in which a formal status of recruit has been replaced by a deeper level of commitment related to learning. This is because activists learn from

others through discursive exchanges online about how to understand the topic that concerns them, and how to organise and meet up with other people (Mercea & Yilmaz, 2018: 21). Gerbaudo (2012) also mentioned this symbolic membership under the idea of ‘togetherness’, which is the crucial glue in spontaneous movement assemblages that lack formal hierarchies.

A key contribution of connective action theory was merging political communication and the contentious politics programme of social movement research together like no other piece of work has done it before. It also elucidated very clearly the role of new technologies in social activism: allowing people to express individually during protest events when they do not want to be represented by SMOs (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; 2013). The theory tends to overcome debates between techno-optimism and techno-scepticism because it does not overlook the importance of past forms of protest and argues that social media now share the mobilisation work of organisations but without replacing them. However, there were some issues about how they conceptualise the role of framing and decentralisation. First, spontaneous and leaderless movements can be tracked back to the distant past (Le Bon, 1913). Now technology is making this spontaneity more visible and rapidly formed, but it is unlikely that it is creating it in the first place. Secondly, Bennett and Segerberg (2012) insisted in the almost deterministic importance of personal action frames in less organisationally-led action, which overlooks a large amount of work on identity and post-materialist movements before the Web 2.0 (Jasper, 1997; Melucci, 1988; Snow & Benford, 1988). As outlined in Subsection 2.2.1, even SMOs have had to find some resonance with their constituents’ individual frames (Benford & Snow, 2000: 621). Therefore, the theory seems to suggest that personal identification with a movement is the novelty, but the real novelty is technological: cheaper and faster CMC platforms are making it possible for this personal identification to become more central than ever in mobilisation.

Many research projects have followed from the publication of ‘connective action’, trying to test some of its postulates in different situations (e.g. (Gerbaudo, 2014; Kavada, 2015; Lim, 2013; Mercea & Yilmaz, 2018; Theocharis et al., 2014; Wright, 2015). For example, Wright (2015) studied the creation of

e-petitions to the government in the UK and found that individuals tended to create more petitions than formal groups, which offers support to the idea that CMC platforms empower individuals more than organisations today. In her examination of the Occupy movement, Kavada (2015) argued that social media play a specific role in the process of constitution of collective actors: blurring the boundaries between the inside and the outside of a movement. But for this to happen, a given movement has to believe in inclusiveness and direct participation, and let this belief permeate their way of using CMC (Kavada, 2015).

After this initial interest in connective action, then the ‘hybridity’ approach to mediated activism moved to explore how the media ecology both shapes and is being shaped by the communicative practices and choices made by activists. In this strand, scholars were concerned with the idea of accumulation and convergence of different media, and developed the concept of ‘media ecology’ to better account for this complexity (Cottle, 2008; Mattoni et al., 2010; Treré & Mattoni, 2016). Some of these authors have also explored how today’s media ecology affects activism, and more specifically activists’ use of the media, for which the concept of ‘media practices’ has been useful; it shifted the focus from objects and rigid structures to subjects and fluid interactions (Couldry, 2004; Kaun, 2016; Mattoni, 2012; Postill, 2009). Over the last decade, theorists and researchers have increasingly found that the changing media ecology has been reshaping how activism is changing the way it is mediated. This could not be captured before by studying each new media at a time.

The concept of media practices was born during a ‘praxis turn’ in social sciences in general (Peterson, 2003; Postill, 2009), which was led by Couldry (2004) in political communication. He proposed to move beyond a limited understanding of the media as structures of production and outcomes (texts), and pay more attention to what people do in relation to the media across different contexts, and how these uses affect other kinds of social practices. Part of this research has been specifically concerned about practices of media consumption of people at home, and its relation to public engagement (Couldry & Langer, 2005; Couldry & Markham, 2016). The key contribution of this approach is to emphasise the link between social activity around the media, and

individual or collective change (Couldry, 2004: 122). However, this approach did not fully explore the varying conditions under which this link takes place. This has left open questions about the specific contextualisation of media praxis, which is of particular relevance considering variations between activist environments and media ecologies across the world.

A wave of studies centred on this praxis aspect of the media came after Couldry's work. For example, Postill (2009: 337-338) added to this literature more precise ideas about consumption, production and context of messages. From these three key points follows the idea that media practices are human actions of production and consumption of a range of meanings –being texts, images and videos the clearest example– in relation to broader structures and systems of interaction that exist in a specific space and time (Postill, 2009: 337). A year after Postill's work, a group of sociologists published an article on activists' creation of autonomous media for a journal specialised on social movements (see Mattoni et al., 2010). This article applied the concept of media practices to the field of activist communication in particular, treating them as a form of action along strikes and art performances, while unpacking both the ways and reasons of using these practices (Mattoni et al., 2010). The main finding was that activist media practices were produced through horizontal interactions between members of a movement group, and in order to empower them to participate in the development of alternative messages (Mattoni et al., 2010). The main precedent for these insights was Rodríguez's research (2003: 190-191) on Chilean community radio, one of the first media-related pieces employing the notion of practice to describe how activists seek to disrupt dominant cultural codes by creating their own media through a citizen empowerment process within their grassroots communities.

Furthermore, the early reflections of Mattoni et al. (2010: 2-4) were also insightful in conceptualising media practices not in a void but actually embedded in a very specific context, defined as a 'changing' or 'hybrid' media ecology. This ecology is characterised by the saturation of global and local communication channels and overlapped top-down/one-way and bottom-up/two-ways flows of communication (Chadwick, 2013; Karpf, 2012; Mattoni et

al., 2010). In this regard, the authors argued that it would be impossible to understand media practices without an ecological view centred on blending different media technologies, routines and contents (Mattoni et al., 2010; Mattoni, 2017). One of the elemental research interests in relation to the hybrid media ecology was centred in the processes of intermedia agenda-setting. These processes consist of the transfer of issue salience from one media to another (Lopez-Escobar et al., 1998; McCombs, 2005). Arguably, considering above points about convergence and accumulation, the hybrid media ecology is increasingly encompassing more of these processes. This is how scholars have examined the influence of Twitter-spread campaigns and weblog-based discussions on the agenda of the mainstream news media, and vice versa (Carr, 2012; Chadwick, 2011; Messner & Distaso, 2008; Parmelee, 2013; Ragas & Kiouisis, 2010; Sweetser et al., 2008). Other authors have also explored how activists' political ads created online (Ragas & Kiouisis, 2010), memetic content (Chadwick, 2017) and e-petitions (Wright, 2015) have shaped news coverage.

In relation to how activist media practices look like in a complex media ecology, existing research has highlighted that activists do not necessarily replace older media with new technology, especially when the former has proved to be effective for their coordination and expressive goals (Dunbar-Hester, 2009: 221; Gillan et al., 2008). A key example given by Givan, Roberts and Soule (2010) is the case of social movements still using e-mail when already having access to social media and instant messaging. Consequently, these studies contend that grassroots activists create hybrid channels of communication, combining various media such as mobile phones and websites, often in response to their representation in mainstream news media (Cottle, 2008; Gillan et al., 2008; Mattoni et al., 2010). This literature further highlights that media practices can be routinised and creative, having both a relational and knowledge dimension (Mattoni & Treré, 2014: 259; 2014). The relational dimension refers to how, in a complex ecology, activists interact with journalists, governments and other activists, whereas the knowledge dimension refers to how activists reflect on these multiple interactions and create ad-hoc messages and recombination of technologies during mobilisation (Cammaerts et al., 2013; Mattoni, 2012).

Jeppesen et al. (2014) went further and described media practices as highly tactical in relation to desired goals and audiences.

The aforementioned insights have been useful to describe better contemporary activists' engagement with the use of various media in a particularly complex media ecology. Giddens's structuration theory (1984) seems to be an appropriate theoretical model to frame the tension between 'older' media practices and creativeness. This is because this theory developed the concept of 'duality of structure', which implies that as much as actors have agency to change macro-structures, their actions are both constrained and enabled by that structure to be challenged (Giddens, 1984: 25). In other words, structures like the hierarchical chart of an organisation exists only as human agents –in this case staff members– help continually reproducing it in accordance with the depicted structure (Yates, 1997: 160). Consequently, agents such as SMOs cannot create new forms of activist communication without starting from conventional practices that existed in their macro-structure, namely, their media ecology understood as a specific place and moment (Giddens, 1984: 2). This would also help explain where the pervasive media ecology came from in the first place (Lamsal, 2012: 112; Yates, 1997: 181). According to Giddens (1984: 26), social structures have no inherent stability outside the human action that constructed them. At some point in history, SMOs created activist media practices that subsequently became more adopted and eventually institutionalised. For this reason, when new generations of activists decided to modify these practices, they had to act at odds with institutionalised patterns and outside the constraints placed by these norms over them (Giddens, 1991: 6; Yates, 1997: 164).

An important contribution of these different strands of literature is their analysis of materialist movements, in most cases those triggered by financial crisis and social inequality, from an identity perspective. This bridged years of disconnection between cultural or 'new' and material or 'labour' movements, with the former focused mostly on LGBTI+, environmental, feminist and animal rights movements (see Section 2.21). However, despite this contribution, the hybridity turn has over-emphasised new loose and leaderless forms of collective

action, which have tended to have a short life in comparison to post-materialist movements. A good example of this has been in fact the student mobilisations of 2011 in Chile, which activated various reform projects of the educational system. This movement gained incredible momentum but did not sustain itself in the long-run<sup>1</sup>. In this regard, are these authors looking at movements or flash mobs? The temporal dimension of these new forms of movement activity is highlighted as its new element, mostly enabled by new media (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Bimber et al., 2005). But little is known about settled movements that have persisted over time, with won and lost battles, and had institutionalised or spread their networks to encompass a greater array of actors. In short, the hybridity literature has overlooked stable, enduring movements that sustain themselves thanks to the role of SMOs but do not have a materialist dimension.

Decades ago, Buechler (1993) criticised the resource-mobilisation theory for placing heavy emphasis on SMOs and ignoring spontaneous movements. Oscillating like a pendulum, his criticism was seemingly heard by a new generation of scholars at the crossroads of social movement and political communication studies, who brought less structured movements back to the table. After some years, while witnessing the disintegration of many of these spontaneous movements focused on austerity policies, it seems timely to add more pieces to the puzzle in relation to SMOs.

By the time data were collected in Chile, the practice-based literature on mediated activism recognised that activists had the ability to create new media practices. It also signalled that they had different ways of interacting with their media ecology. For example, political communication studies have suggested that NGOs vary significantly in the way they use different CMC platforms (Lovejoy et al., 2012). Yet, despite these hints, this literature has not explained the process of creation of media practices neither had examined its variation. Thus, a question that feeds in the rich debate promoted by the above authors is how new activist media practices are developed in the first place. Further to this, exploring the role of SMOs would be also an interesting addition to this

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<sup>1</sup> This is one of the main reasons why the 2011 student uprising was not included in this research. A more detailed explanation is offered in Chapter 3.

literature. For these reasons, this research will address the process of development of new media practices and how SMOs shape such a process.

### **2.3. Applying organisational theory to the study of SMOs' media practices**

The previous section concluded by situating the thesis in the broad literature on social activism and media. It concluded by indicating the main research interests of this thesis in relation to the gaps found in the existing literature. Now this section strengthens the thesis' theoretical basis by exploring the contribution of organisational theory to the study of SMOs and their practices. The research process made evident that not all SMOs had the same reaction to a dynamic environment. Some of them were very aware of this dynamism and shared in the interviews some strategies to take advantage of it in relation to their specific goals (see Chapter 4). Some others appeared to be less informed or reluctant to start new practices from scratch. These variations have not been directly addressed yet in the studies of media hybridity, and consequently there is little theoretical basis to draw hypotheses about how differently SMOs could engage with the process of development of new media practices. This has led to search for a theoretical model that could shed light on how SMOs within established movement have reacted to the new media ecology. After fieldwork, the thesis engaged with the neo-institutionalist strand of organisational theory as a complementary body of research that could account better for variations.

Organisational theorists have closely studied the processes of evolution, adaptation and learning of government institutions and private firms since the 1980s (Cantarello et al., 2012; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Jansen et al., 2006; Levinthal & March, 1981; Levitt & March, 1988; March, 1991; March & Olsen, 1983; Powell, 1981). In what came to be known as 'new institutionalism' (March & Olsen, 1983), they have approached organisational change without using the presumptions of rational choice. In an attempt to dismantle the notion, prevalent at the time, that political institutions aggregate individual behaviour and their actions are based on interest-based choices, March and Olsen (1983: 734) conceptualised institutions as structures autonomous from individuals that sometimes tend to follow inefficient and symbolic patterns of action. Observing the case of resilience of invariant political structures to individual action, these

authors paid attention to the importance for organisations of complying with historically settled norms of appropriateness (March & Olsen, 1983: 74--741). Eventually, this interpretation led to theorising about emulative behaviour: institutions adopt certain standards, even if regarded as inefficient by others, simply because they have been historically considered as 'the right thing to do' in politics, and because the idea of 'complying' matters at the symbolic level (March & Olsen, 1983: 734). In this sense, emulators do not think in efficiency terms, or do not make calculations on the basis of consequentialist logics.

DiMaggio & Powell (1983: 150) studied growing homogeneity across institutional structures and called it 'isomorphism'. In this process, organisations start resembling one another in response to conformity to wider institutions and legitimacy within an organisational field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 147). Organisational fields have been understood in neo-institutional theory as an aggregation of organisations that constitutes a recognised area of business or institutional activity, for example, public administration or the IT industry (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983) three mechanisms explain isomorphism in a field. The first is top-down coercion or 'normative persuasion' exerted formally or informally by institutions and funding sources, which constrains organisations to comply with legally expected or mandated behaviour and structures (Checkel, 2005: 812; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 150-154; Meseguer, 2016: 72). The second is mimetic and will be of importance for this research: the standardisation effect of organisations faced by uncertainty –i.e. poorly understood technologies– that imitate other organisations deemed legitimate or successful without having evidence that an adopted model will enhance their performance (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 151-152). The third is professional normativity, which plays a role when employees and trade unions diffuse models across organisations that seek prestige (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 152).

The mimetics and normativity mechanisms of isomorphism described above constitute horizontal forms of influence on organisations, which are in opposition to vertical forms such as coercion (Meseguer, 2016: 72). In this horizontality, the network structure of many organisational fields plays a key role as it sets out

reciprocal patterns of communication as opposed to hierarchical and competitive –or market– governance structures (Powell, 1981: 295-296). Along these lines, political scientists have explored the socialisation and diffusion dimensions of organisational learning in relation to policy transference across institutions. For them, emulation is an internalisation of values and roles diffused by other institutions in horizontal rather than vertical ways (Checkel, 2005: 801; Meseguer, 2016: 78-79). In reality, just a few of organisations strategically calculate status, credibility and monetary rewards involved in adopting certain practices (Checkel, 2005: 808; Meseguer, 2016: 67). They seem to do so unreflexively instead. This accounts better for organisations that have limited resources to properly calculate costs and benefits of alternative courses of action, and therefore find it cheaper and more convenient to study their environment for cues about what is the appropriate role to play in their field (Checkel, 2005: 810), or appears to have worked in the past (Meseguer, 2016: 72). Ultimately, the idea of appropriateness has implied some automaticity and the importance of prestige in networks. In relation to automaticity, organisations tend to adopt acceptable roles without reflecting too much about why they are internalising this behaviour (Checkel, 2005: 810). In relation to identity, the chances that organisations find useful cues about what is habitual increase with a greater sense of belonging to a particular reciprocity-based group (Checkel, 2005: 810).

The concept of emulation has been later opposed with the idea of innovation in subsequent neo-institutional theory work (March, 1991). DiMaggio and Powell (1983: 157) had already suggested that an innovative environment would mean the exact opposite of isomorphism trends: Instead of resembling leading institutions, an innovative organisation would depart from expected standards. However, they only paid attention to unintended innovation processes, which occur when some organisations emulate others imperfectly and end up developing new strategies by accident (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 151). March (1991: 71) investigated this topic further and, under the influence of a social learning approach, defined innovation as a strategic allocation of resources to explore and experiment with new possibilities. In this regard, organisations that not only exploit prevalent practices and technologies –referred to as certainties

in March's research— but also invest in exploring alternative possibilities tend to sustain themselves over time and grow more and better than those that do not (Cantarello et al., 2012: 37; March, 1991: 71). Organisations' capacity to balance exploitation and exploration has been called 'ambidexterity' (Benner & Tushman, 2003; Cantarello et al., 2012; Jansen et al., 2006).

In light of innovative behaviour, March (1991) also examined organisation learning more closely. He has distinguished mutual learning between members of the same organisation from learning between competing organisations (March, 1991: 73-74). Thus, differently from emulation, innovation is a contextualised learning process that entails some rationality on the basis of effectiveness goals. Furthermore, it became evident that resource capabilities and material goals drive organisational innovation (March, 1991: 71). This is mainly because ambidextrous organisations require not only trained personnel to understand technologies already in use, but also resources to invest in research for explorative ventures (Cantarello et al., 2012: 37). Regarding its rationality, the fact that organisations may compete with each other for scarce opportunities and resources —i.e. governmental subsidies— would suggest that choices are made according to calculated decisions (Hey, 1982; March, 1991).

Recent research has extended neo-institutional theories further. Benner and Tushman (2002; 2003) have argued that firms' top management aims to reduce variance and secure stability in organisational practices, which facilitates the extension and refinement of existing activities at the expenses of explorative innovation. This has led scholars to create a clear-cut division between exploration and exploitation as two incompatible activities (Benner & Tushman, 2002; 2003). Cantarello et al. (2012) have recently challenged this argument by making the case that due to their procedures required to acquire information, firms often switch between exploitation and exploration. This point therefore challenges the idea that exploration and exploitation are opposite behaviours, and content that they rather represent two poles in a continuum of organisational learning (Cantarello et al., 2012: 44).

In summary, one of the main lessons from neo-institutional theory has been elucidating that organisations learn from others in their fields about adaptability

practices in different ways. Many organisations learn in active ways by processing available information and making relatively informed choices that could improve their performance (March, 1991). Often, they seek a balance between taking risks to explore or innovate new possibilities, and enjoying the certainty and stability given by already existing norms and technologies (Levinthal & March, 1981; Levitt & March, 1988; March, 1991). Many other organisations assimilate dominant trends in their field without much reflection on this adaptation process, or due to coercion exerted by above forces, which are understood here as emulators (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 150; March & Olsen, 1983: 740). In these scenarios, exploration is less likely to occur and organisations limit themselves to exploiting or emulating the practices they are familiar with (Cantarello et al., 2012; March, 1991: 85). These two behaviours build a tension between innovation and emulation, which comprise different levels of rationality, information, symbolism and context (Checkel, 2005; Meseguer, 2016). These concepts have been applied to the study of SMOs in recent years. Thus, as a theoretical model, these will be used in this research to overcome simplification of SMOs and their practices as invariant categories.

Works at the intersection of social movement and organisational learning studies have been growing since an initial dialogue in the late 1980s. This exchange has taken an important leap in the last decades (Clemens, 1993; Clemens & Cook, 1999; Davis et al., 2005; Fligstein & McAdam, 2011; Karpf, 2012; Lang, 2012; Minkoff, 1997; Schneiberg & Lounsbury, 2017; Schneiberg & Soule, 2005; Soule, 2007). The collaboration has been pursued in order to identify and use common concepts across social movements and organisations, which have been often treated as two separate categories, but in reality overlap greatly due to their shared process of collective strategy (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011: 22). It is thus particularly relevant in times when new forms of collective action appear to be emerging, which however remain poorly theorised (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011: 23; Schneiberg & Lounsbury, 2017).

A review of the literature combining movements and organisations shows three major phases: a rational choice interpretation of social movement diffusion; studies of diffusion waves across movements; and the contemporary

focus on relational learning. Despite their contribution to the field, most of these strands focus more on why SMOs come to resemble one another than on how and why some become innovators. Early attempts to explain diffusion across social movements emerged in the political process theory. McAdam (1982: 51) suggested that aggrieved groups deliberately fashion the meanings that will be used by emergent SMOs to justify their actions. In this interpretation, structures such as SMOs and political opportunities cannot produce social movements without the subjective meanings that people give to their situation. Therefore, in order to participate, people need to perceive that they are aggrieved and conclude that they will be more effective by acting collectively (McAdam, 1982: 48). These explanations shaped part of the media analysis. Blumler & Kavanagh (1999: 212) have contended that campaign actors create innovative media practices to stay competitive in a dynamic environment.

Based on the work of DiMaggio & Powell (1983), a new generation of scholars paid attention to the isomorphic effects of cross-movement diffusion. As detailed in the previous subsection, DiMaggio & Powell (1983: 154-156) argued that in a dynamic environment, organisations may not understand emerging technologies overall, or how they relate to their goals, which pushes them to model themselves according to other organisations in their field; often this unfolds without reflecting on the effectiveness of certain adopted actions. Clemens (1993) analysed the organisational form of radical and marginalised SMOs, finding answers to how and why groups can disrupt isomorphism trends by innovating novel practices but without avoiding emulation. In her view, marginalisation forces radical SMOs to search for alternative models of organisations, and in this searching process they only find familiar repertoires in the environment (Clemens, 1993: 755). In many cases, these SMOs deem available paths of action as inappropriate both tactically and culturally; however, since these are the only patterns they can use as a model, they deploy them in unfamiliar ways (Clemens, 1993: 771-772). Consequently, far from simply generating homogenisation within a field, isomorphism can also indirectly promote organisational change and the introduction of new practices (Clemens, 1993: 763). She highlighted that an SMO will tend to imitate traditional models

and the way they were implemented by their opponent, especially if they seemed to be efficient (Clemens, 1993).

Evidence from new left movements in Europe and the US convinced McAdam & Rucht (1993) to posit that SMOs learned successful strategic repertoires of other organisations, particularly their opponents (McAdam & Rucht, 1993: 59-63). In this model, information about deployed strategies is retrieved from the media (McAdam & Rucht, 1993: 59). What was novel for other scholars in McAdam & Rucht's work (1993: 56) was the argument that learning about other SMOs' repertoires occurred in the context of indirect relational ties between activists. These ties can help activists identify transmitters and adopters, when accounting for cross-national diffusion, or initiators and spin-offs, when referring to time, which are the two endpoints of the cross-movement diffusion chain (McAdam, 1994; McAdam & Rucht, 1993). The distinction between these two levels is useful to understand emulation better: Initiators are early-adopters that create new repertoires of collective action, whereas spin-off movements learn and repeat these repertoires in subsequent mobilisation processes (McAdam, 1994: 229; Tarrow, 1998).

Further contributions in the field of social movement used the ideas of relational and sequential transmission to describe better the process of diffusion in activism, often controversially called 'contagion waves' (Tarrow, 2005; 2012). Political process authors added the term 'innovation' in order to define the object to be diffused through different relational channels from transmitters to adopters (Soule, 2007: 29). They also unpacked the concept of relational diffusion by highlighting the importance of already existing interpersonal contacts between activists and trusted allies, as well as organisational networks formed by SMOs (Tarrow, 2005).

Aspects of relational diffusion have informed both media practices and media ecology approaches to activism. Activists' routines to consume, produce and combine media practices are spaces of socialisation that, in a globalised world, can easily cross the national borders and diffuse ideas and practices to other like-minded groups (Mattoni et al, 2010). In line with social movement studies, cross-movement collaborations channel media knowledge from more

experienced to emergent SMOs. Other researchers have paid attention to the coercive nature that relational learning may take. Norm compliance and institutional leverage play sometimes a crucial role in the spread of practices across SMOs dependent on state funding and mandates (Flanagin et al, 2006), even if supposedly it should not weight as heavily in the case of social movements as it does for policy-makers (Givan et al, 2010: 9). This is evident when SMOs are highly formalised organisations that have registered as NGOs, because regulations prescribe how they can receive funds and report procedures (Flanagin et al., 2006: 38). But it may also well happen when informal groups join movement coalitions, as certain commitments will define what media practices are the most appropriate to their goals (Flanagin et al, 2006: 38).

The above theoretical insights can be underpinned not only by neo-institutionalism but also by Giddens's structurationism (1984) relatively well. If emerging media practices are developed by activists after their exposition to media knowledge through relational ties, then we can argue that the media ecology shapes SMOs' agency as much as it is shaped by their actions. When we say that this ecology is shaped, we basically recognise that part of the socio-technological environment is reproduced by activists when they generate connectivity ties, learn from other agents and produce or reinforce change (Giddens, 1984: 25; Giddens, 1991: 4-5; Lamsal, 2012: 120). In this regard, organisational change does not occur after one single agent creates an innovation but rather when more members of a given organisation start acting in ways that reinforce the first innovation (Yates, 1997: 164). Thus, this chain of events requires interactions between inventors and users to a great extent (Yates, 1997: 164). It is also very important to pinpoint that resistance may emerge during these interactions: Since agents of change require others who enact new practices, there will always be those actors who resist new procedures and challenge their institutionalisation (Yates, 1997: 167).

Givan et al (2010: 8-10) theorised the existence of paces of adoption that appear between innovators and adopters; in this regard, there is a relevant distinction between organisations adopting innovations very early, for instrumental reasons, and others adapting very slowly for identity reasons. At

the endpoint there are also non-adopters (Givan et al., 2010: 8), which will be examined in detail in the next part. This partly came to respond to the contention that it seemed unlikely that SMOs would modify their perception of themselves just because another organisation was convincing enough about this; what actually happens is that SMOs react differently to a constantly changing environment. Further to that, Polletta (2008) proposed that SMOs learn how to behave according to cultural templates that prescribe forms and actions within a given activist subfield. In this sense, emulation occurs mostly because SMOs want to meet these cultural expectations defining who they are and how to grow (Polletta, 2008: 89-90). In line with previous models, both relations and frames are the channels for SMOs to learn about cultural templates, particularly when these templates manage to transit from being current to become 'common sense' (Polletta, 2008: 88-90). Emulation becomes an expected behaviour among SMOs when the rate of adoption of a given innovation is very high in the field (Givan et al., 2010: 8). This is the case of activist media practices that have been originally conceived as innovative, in specific situations, but eventually become ubiquitous across many different situations (Mattoni et al., 2010: 4).

In regard to media technology, Constanza-Chock (2013: 97) offered a key clue in relation to the diffusion process of media practices: Assuming that some organisations take up an 'organiser' role in relation to the adoption of hybrid media practices, adopters listen to them to keep their credibility. This point is important for the thesis' argument, as it suggests that SMOs engage with the decentralised and participatory design of hybrid media practices in order to obtain symbolic rewards that they would miss if they maintain top-down routines to consume and produce media messages (Constanza-Chock, 2013: 97).

One of the major problems of Polletta's approach (2008) is that it treats culture as institutionalised schemas that shape activists' strategies without much resistance; as if these schemas were the only option because inappropriateness is penalised and too risky, too uncertain for SMOs (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Polletta, 2008: 86). This is not always the case. In a superficial sense, some community-oriented professional NGOs want to avoid being seen as highly institutionalised or isomorphic, for which they constantly communicate their

non-profit values to their publics (Dimitrov, 2008). In a more substantial sense, Polletta (2009: 85) offers a 'radical' conceptualisation of SMO innovation, totally opposed to emulation: it would be a choice to be penalised, much in line with an ideological impetus to break with the past, challenge institutions and create new lines of contention. This point seems to revisit Clemens' (1993: 771-772) argument that radicalism ends up reshaping familiar repertoires.

Besides the above points, decades of work on SMOs' learning and diffusion processes have bypassed a discussion of innovation. Even if little is known yet about SMO innovation in relation to media practices, most scholars agree that innovation is what partly shapes today's media ecology (Chadwick, 2007; 2017). This point challenges simplistic views of SMOs as passive emulators affected by their environment, and reveals more detail about exploration of new practices and then exploitation of these practices once becoming available (Chadwick, 2007; 2017). Moreover, adopting practices in relation to media technology to very specific goals, timing and resources is always a window to innovation. In this regard, Chadwick (2007) argued that the 'appropriation' process behind adoption is what can ultimately lead activists to transform their media environment, even if unintendedly.

A number of social movement theorists have explored how SMOs learn repertoires of action, and the cues they consider in order to gain prominence in the movement they represent. This is to comprehend the variation that exist in SMOs' creation of new media practices, a point that scholars have missed when describing how media practices work in activism (Mattoni & Treré, 2014), and how activists 'jump into' hybrid processes of communication (Chadwick, 2007). The factor of capabilities is certainly present in existing literature, but it is not triangulated with organisational behaviour, namely, learning, emulation and diffusion. Digital divides –access to resources, equipment and skills to adequately consume/produce media technology– makes it harder for some SMOs to create new media practices consistently (Mattoni et al, 2010: 13; Constanza-Chock, 2013: 110-111). Many grassroots movement groups struggle to use technology properly when they are more familiar with 'pedestrian' communication platforms, and when busy trying to harmonise the role of older

media in a complex ecology (Mattoni et al, 2010: 13). In this case, it would be expected that certain organisations simply emulate others, as they are not as media-savvy as other groups and professionals and community leaders but seek the legitimacy these technologies lend them.

Karpp (2012) has been one of the few scholars thus far that has applied precepts of neo-institutional theory to advocacy communication. In his argument, new forms of advocacy organisation, that he calls 'netroots organisations' (see Subsection 2.2.3), continuously face a tension between 'disruptive innovation' and path-dependency in their course of communicative action (Karpp, 2012). Advocacy organisations experience change when embracing continual acquisition and use of new CMC platforms to save costs in coordination efforts, because these technological innovations in turn disrupt 'beneficial inefficiencies' in which organisations often get trapped in (Karpp, 2012: 162-163). Beneficial inefficiency refers here to the decay that popular political tactics, deemed as effective, suffer over time after being widely diffused, partly because opponents and authorities soon develop responsive counter-innovations that render the former ineffective (Karpp, 2012: 164-165; Tarrow, 1998). These points sound familiar because they restate the idea of exploration and exploitation examined in Subsection 2.3.1. However, little research has in fact used this terminology so directly for advocacy communication like Karpp's work. Yet, this contribution has touched upon novel decentralised forms of movement organisation only, which thus opens a window of opportunity to examine this in relation to SMOs. This subsection has ultimately suggested that activist groups would move between creating new media practices and continue using conventional ones, which is contingent upon their need to react to their counterparts' actions.

## **2.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has situated the thesis in the main bodies of literature that have examined the relation between social activism and media. It has surveyed the contributions and gaps of social movements, political communication and neo-institutional studies. The first part of the chapter argued that social movement and political communication studies have provided important insights to understand the topic, however have remained relatively independent from each

other. They have also been internally divided by different strands. Social movement theory has offered limited understanding of how CMC platforms are shaping contemporary movements, especially SMOs, whereas political communication research has been criticised for its trend towards ‘media-determinism’ in explaining digitally enabled mobilisation. Ultimately, ‘older’ and ‘newer’ media have been too often treated as two separate categories of analysis in both literatures, which is not the most accurate snapshot of today’s ecology in most of the world. In consequence, the mainstream study of mediated activism has provided a fragmented rather than holistic answer, each new media innovation at a time (Kaun, 2016), without really explaining how SMOs interact with different media at the same time.

The chapter then argued that more recently both literatures have found some substantive synergies. With ideas around connective action, ‘netroots’, media practices and hybrid media ecology, an emerging strand has been able to better explain how social movements are placed in mediation processes. It has also explained their use a diverse array of media available in their environment. Yet, despite these valuable insights, most of these findings were applied mostly to decentralised movement networks and loosely coordinated or digitally enabled activist organisations. Little research has been conducted on SMOs in relation to media practices, and even less on the process of creating them and the array of organisational responses that SMOs have in relation to this process. These gaps have ultimately motivated this thesis to formulate a research question about the ways in which SMOs have created new media practices within a rapidly changing media ecology, with special attention to their reasons to create them in the first place. This question reaches back into SMOs but heavily grounded on contemporary ideas about media ecologies and practices.

Being sensitive to the complexity of the topic, and the aspects that have been overlooked in the literature, the above question also proposed to explain why new media practices have varied across different SMOs and movements more broadly. In light of this question, the second part of the chapter has engaged with neo-institutional theories on organisational learning in search of concepts that can explain the different ways in which SMOs might be interacting

with their media ecology. Neo-institutionalism has in fact found some avenues of collaboration with SMO research and, as a result of this, the concepts of innovation and emulation have been increasingly applied to study SMOs' repertoires. Not much has been said about media practices in particular, however, which has set out the main motivation not only to explore unusual literature paths but also to adopt a constructivist methodological approach in this thesis, which will be the core topic of the next chapter.

## **Chapter 3. Research design: Data production, interpretation and theory building process**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter sets out the research design developed to address the thesis' main question: In what ways and for what reasons have SMOs created new media practices in a rapidly changing media ecology, and why have these practices varied across different SMOs? As discussed in Chapter 2, the use of conventional media outlets and platforms for activist goals has been well-explored, but how activist groups have played a role in developing new media practices has not been fully explained in the existing literature. Furthermore, questions about mediated activism in the context of South America and among post-materialist movements have received little academic attention in comparison to mobilisation experiences centred on socioeconomic distribution in Europe, the US and Arab nations. Finally, the previous chapter has revealed a gap in the literature on mediated activism with respect to relatively hierarchical SMOs, partly because most of the studies in the last decade have focused on digitally enabled movements of leaderless, spontaneous and 'flash' nature. Based on these theoretical and empirical gaps, I have designed a mixed qualitative methods research approach that adopted some principles of informed grounded theory (IGT), which helped address original issues with little theoretical consistency. IGT parameters have in turn influenced the choice of a single country case study for comparative analysis, and underpinned a triangulation of various data sources.

The first section of this chapter explains the IGT approach and protocols that guide the thesis' research design. Hypotheses about why and how SMOs have created new media practices, and about variations across SMOs and movements, were difficult to deduce from the literature. For this reason, precepts of IGT have been applied to build original theoretical insights about the topic. IGT is an open-ended method that potentially produces unmanageable amounts of data; consequently its precepts were applied according to some

pragmatic protocols in order to set out a moment of theoretical saturation appropriate to the time and resources allocated to this doctoral research project.

The second section explains the rationale for selecting Chile as single country case study and its contemporary environmental and LGBTI+ movements as specific cases to be compared. Since the thesis's chief objective is to generate new knowledge about SMOs' diverse media practices in South America, choosing Chile as a case has been strategic. This decision was based on existing literature and pilot interviews. Chile stands as an information-rich context and an interesting case of post-authoritarian politics where mobilisation has re-emerged slowly in a context of fast economic growth. The country's environmental and LGBTI+ movements are two post-materialist movements sharing many similarities but contrasting in some respects. Of particular significance for this study is the fact that research about these movements in other regions has highlighted their reliance on their beneficiaries' participation in collective action. They have used different media outlets and platforms in creative ways as well. Yet, the balance between cultural expression and policy advocacy is different in each movement, which raises key questions about how their characteristics influenced their practices.

The final section of the chapter presents the methods of data production and interpretation. This research combined semi-structured qualitative interviews with systematic document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in two fieldwork periods in Chile between 2016 and 2017 with representatives from 41 SMOs included in this study, which has helped generate a contemporary snapshot of the topic. SMOs' official documents (annual reports, brochures and statements), websites and social media profiles and posts (Facebook and Twitter) were analysed to retrieve information on SMOs' goals and organisational parameters and thus triangulate data about media practices. This section concludes with a discussion of the ethical dimensions of the research process, as this thesis subscribes to the standards of ethically responsible research and some key steps were taken to safeguard them.

### 3.2. The use of an informed grounded theory approach

The epistemological orientation of this thesis' research design is social constructivism. This position views social phenomena as the result of human construction and negotiation of meaning assigned to their reality through interaction (Bryman, 2012: 32-33; Robson & McCartan, 2016: 24). Current trends of social constructivism emphasise social interaction as a means to interpret the world, for which they give great importance to the use of language (Crotty, 1998: 52-58; Prawat & Floden, 2010). In a continuum from less to more objectivism, most variants of social constructivism tend to go far from positivism, a position that views social entities as external to the observer and has a preference for deductive analyses tools such as replication and falsification of hypotheses, and prediction models (Bryman, 2012: 27-33; Charmaz, 2014; Robson & McCartan, 2016: 21). As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, this research is motivated by changes in social practices. Therefore, the ecological aspects of how SMOs use the media, namely the context, matter for this inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Consequently, the chief reason to rely on social constructivism lies in capturing SMOs' own meanings, explanations and experiences with the creation of socially constructed media practices.

As reiterated throughout this and the previous chapter, existing studies on the relationship between SMOs and the media have described how media practices are used in the context of social activism. However, these studies have not really explained how and why new media practices have been created, and under what sort of conditions this is more likely to occur. Hypotheses are thus difficult to deduce in this context. Instead, the research topic must be based on the generation of original theoretical insights from contextualised empirical data. Consequently, this thesis relies on some precepts of informed grounded theory (IGT) as a methodology to produce and interpret data (Charmaz, 2005; 2014; Thornberg, 2012). More specifically, the thesis is sustained on a research protocol that uses a pragmatic version of IGT (Dey, 1999).

Grounded theory is a multi-method flexible strategy of inductive research that moves iteratively across empirical cases and concepts to develop original theoretical abstraction, traditionally in the form of causal theory (Charmaz,

2014: 1; Emmel, 2013: 12; Peters, 2014: 5; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Under the guidance of grounded theory, data collection and analysis are neither separate nor sequential stages in the research process but rather simultaneous and interdependent (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 1). It therefore inverts the logic of deduction in which the engagement with data comes once causal theories have been formulated (Thomas, 2006: 238). The data used to generate explanatory abstractions are retrieved from a combination of researcher's prior assumptions about existing literature, interactions with participants, personal evaluations and observations of settings in a given context (Charmaz, 2014: 3; Mattoni, 2014: 21; Mills et al., 2006).

After decades of application, the range of grounded theory strategies have evolved, having some versions more orthodox than others (Thomas, 2006: 239; Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 2). At the beginning, Glaser and Strauss (1967) conceived it as a rigorous procedure linked to positivism. In this version, the use of previous theoretical knowledge was postponed until the end of the analysis and even discouraged for the sake of an analysis 'free of contamination' (Charmaz, 2014: 8-12). This delay was meant to guarantee that researchers did not force data to fit into pre-existing concepts (Thornberg, 2012: 243-244). Later works started to recognise the relevance of existing literature, and then added personal experience and prior assumptions to the model used by researchers to produce theoretical sensitivity (Dey, 1999; Mattoni, 2014: 25). This is what Charmaz (2008) defined as constructivist grounded theory, where prior knowledge gained more preponderance and was used to guide both data production and interpretation processes (Charmaz, 2005: 509; 2014: 13).

In recent years, constructivist grounded theory has adopted a new form defined by Thornberg (2012) as informed grounded theory (IGT). This orientation has become much more systematic than prior versions in the use of prevalent literature, meaning that it relies on specific strategies to subject this body of research to rigorous scrutiny (Charmaz, 2008; Thornberg, 2012: 243). Theoretical frameworks are explored with an open mind and used in a sensitive, creative and flexible way as sources of inspiration, experiences, associations and reflections

(Dey, 1993: 63; Thornberg, 2012). IGT, however, stops short of a mechanical application of theoretical categories to empirical cases (Thornberg, 2012: 249).

Constructivist versions of grounded theory are not only rooted in an inductive research approach but also in the perspective of pragmatism (Charmaz, 2005; 2014). Under this perspective, methodological decisions are made on the basis of personal values and the most relevant and practical considerations for the researcher (Biesta & Burbules, 2003: 107-108; Robson & McCartan, 2016: 28). One way in which pragmatic parameters were applied to a IGT framework was the use of analytic induction as a research approach (Dey, 1993; Thomas, 2006). This approach defines strategies to limit the iterative movement between data and theory on the basis of time and resource constrains, which translates into setting out a moment to stop new stages of data production (Bryman, 2012: 566-567; Thomas, 2006: 238-240). This moment cannot be always planned but it is more likely to occur during fieldwork; it is informed by what the researcher considers as theoretical exhaustion on the basis of existing literature along with personal experience (Dey, 1999; Thomas, 2006: 240). The moment took place in June 2017, after the second fieldwork period in Chile. Using pragmatic protocols to adopt IGT to a research project is of crucial importance when time and resource constrains are pervasive, which is the case of this doctoral research. This is because grounded theory, in general, tends to produce large amounts of data, which can become difficult to manage in a given timeframe (Olesen, 2007).

This thesis' core research strategy was systematically built on an informed and pragmatic version of constructivist grounded theory for three reasons. The first is that it incorporates the existing literature in an appropriate way for this research's goals. Prior theoretical understanding of how and why SMOs have created new media practices is scarce, indirect and generally inconsistent; it has demonstrated to be insufficient to formulate hypotheses. At the same time, it is not possible to assert that theoretical insights are totally absent. For this reason, an IGT approach can take advantage of the work that has approached the topic indirectly and repurpose it in a sensitive and creative way for this research project (Mattoni, 2014: 24; Thornberg, 2012: 244-245). In relation to empirical gaps, IGT is also adequate for the study of poorly understood processes in the

Global South, where in order to avoid conceptual stretching, the properties of the culture under scrutiny must be captured (Peters, 2014: 24).

A second reason to use IGT is that it examines social practices in an exploratory framework, thus without forcing causality or imposing the researcher's interpretations (Coe, 2012: 157; Mattoni, 2014: 24; Thornberg, 2012: 245; Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 2). This is because this methodology foregrounds how research participants reflect on their own context and have given meaning to their practices by directly asking them what they have done with the media and for what reasons (Askanius & Gustafsson, 2010; Coe, 2012; Couldry, 2004). Finally, IGT simply makes sense in the field of media and activism. Overall, since IGT uncovers highly contextualised human behaviour step by step, it fits well with research on collective action, organisational change, workplace practices and construction of identities, among other social processes (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 2). These are in fact key aspects of the research question presented in this thesis. In this regard, both Mattoni (2014: 21-22) and Della Porta (2014: 231-232) have stressed the importance of qualitative research and grounded theory in the study of cultural and communication processes in social movements such as those involved in activist media practices.

Finally, to explain better the practical implications of using ICT, this thesis is based on the decision of presenting a heavily argument-based literature review in Chapter 2, and subsequently going into more details about specific theories and empirical research throughout the empirical chapters. To be sure, Chapter 2 discussed various strands of literature across different disciplines in order to outline overarching debates and broad gaps that have justified this thesis' research question. But, considering its long reach, the review did not account for all the particular mechanisms related to SMOs, their media practices and their organisational behaviour. In that regard, it did not work as a repository of concepts as literature reviews do in other types of research. Instead, the empirical chapters will be doing so as the discussion evolves, which is a more creative, inventive and useful way of engaging with existing theory and research.

### 3.3. Rationale for case selection and background information

The selection of Chile as a single country case study, and its environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs for comparative analysis, responds to the research rationale outlined above. This thesis aims to understand how and why SMOs have created new media practices, and more specifically why these practices have varied across different SMOs. The study of mediated activism in general has posed an important geographical unbalance. The analysis of social movements and NGOs in relation to the media has explored the US and Europe more than any other regions. The study of digitally enabled activism focused heavily on semi or fully authoritarian and highly unstable Arab regimes (Aday et al., 2010; Howard et al., 2011; Rane & Salem, 2012; Youmans & York, 2012). And the new hybridity turn in the study of activist media practices has generated insights mostly from cases in the Global North, in countries characterised by the maturity of democratic rule, advanced market economy and strong penetration of new technologies (e.g. Jeppesen et al., 2014; Karpf, 2010; Mattoni, 2012). Consequently, little is known about other corners of the global media ecology. For various reasons to be exposed throughout this section, Chile is an insightful candidate to start looking at new regions and ‘de-Westernise’ our knowledge about this topic more generally (Mignolo, 2005: xix). But since there is scarce existing literature to be consulted on Chilean activism from a media hybridity perspective, an IGT approach has been chosen as a research approach.

The IGT approach helps use empirical data as the main source for theory-building on scarcely studied themes. Conceptual stability is achieved better when the properties of the empirical reality under assessment are fully incorporated in the analysis (Peters, 2014). In this regard, the IGT approach is closely linked to the use of case studies to generate consistent and high-quality empirical evidence that could sustain theory development. Creswell (2013) has treated both grounded theory and case study research as two distinct approaches, however Morgan (2014) has embedded case studies within a broader grounded theory strategy because they lead to a way of formulating questions and not of generating theory, which is the role of IGT. Case study research is used in qualitative research because it allows researchers to investigate

contemporary phenomena in-depth, working on ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, and take into account their real-life context, which is particularly relevant when the boundaries between phenomena and contexts are unclear (Farquhar, 2012; Gerring, 2006; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014: 16).

To be sure, the contexts to be captured can often be the country where the sources of data (i.e. organisations) are based (Farquhar, 2012: 6), whereas cases can be communities within this country (Bryman, 2012: 76). In this case, I considered broad social movements as communities. From the above points, the advantages of using a single country case study are evident for this study. The strategy guides a focused, lengthy examination of movements and their organisations within a country where it is expected that the context will have a great influence on the processes under study. A disadvantage of cases studies in general is that they provide a poor basis for generalisation from one single case to many others (Stake, 1995: 7-8). Nonetheless, what is lost in terms of representativity, it is gained in terms of rich empirical data (Yin, 2014), which is exactly what this IGT approach requires to explore SMOs’ media practices in a scarcely studied context like Chile.

### **3.3.1. Chile as a single country case study**

The reasons to choose a single country case study as a research strategy come from the IGT approach required to make original theoretical contributions to our understanding of SMOs’ changing media practices. Chile has been chosen to generate very specific empirical contributions to this literature. The decision was made during deskwork research, mainly through a systematic review of the existing literature that, as pointed out earlier, made evident geographical unbalances between Northern and Southern countries. Memos were taken during this stage and fed into the planning of the subsequent research fieldwork. After this deskwork, pilot interviews were carried out in Santiago between April and May 2016 with local political communication scholars and two media professionals who had some experience with NGOs’ publicity strategies (see Appendix 5 for more information). This pilot helped test the main ideas about the topic that emerged from a review of the literature, and thus helped confirm that Chile was a fruitful ground for developing original theoretical insights about

SMOs' media practices. As follows, brief background information about the country will be presented in order to justify this choice.

Many reasons make of Chile an interesting case for analysis, but three main dimensions have been highlighted in direct relation to the creation of new media practices in a changing media ecology. These reasons are: its advanced neoliberal media system, the political conditions under which mobilisation has unfolded today, and its high levels of political centralisation and socio-economic inequality. Firstly, Chile is a mid-income liberal democracy that has succeeded economically in the last three decades of democratic consolidation. Chile has one of the most open market economies of the world, above the average of the Americas, being ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in the world according to the 2019 Index of Economic Freedom (Miller et al., 2018). Its model has been considered 'exportable' in relation to its openness and level of privatisation of services (Cabalín, 2014c; Madariaga, 2018). Chile has therefore resembled more developed nations and therefore is located somewhere between developed and developing democracies. Also, both the maturity of its media market and complexity of its technological environment are clear examples of this success.

In relation to the country's news media market, Chile's press freedom status is considered free. However, despite good political and economic environment scores, some political bias and self-censorship on topics such as social protests were observed in the coverage of news media. The thriving of independent media still remains difficult due to a concentration of private ownership and advertising (Freedom House, 2016). Today's media system in Chile is almost completely private with the exception of one state regulated and autonomous TV station, which is funded by market forces (Fuenzalida, 2002: 71). The work of Navia and Osorio (2015) has highlighted the existence of an ideological bias in the two most important private newspapers in Chile (El Mercurio and La Tercera), where their political and economic views –actively associated with the right– are promoted. In such conditions, it becomes harder for oppositional forces to gain positive news coverage in important media (Navia & Osorio, 2015: 467-468). This combined with the lack of public service broadcasting has made it difficult to have competing agendas and include

diversity of voices, a situation that has affected civil society the most (Hughes & Mellado, 2015).

The free-market environment has however at the same time made it possible for younger generations to have almost unrestricted access to online media (Harlow, 2011: 226; Scherman et al., 2015: 167; Welp & Wheatley, 2012: 177-178). In more advanced democracies, there is evidence that using online media often merely reinforces existing political processes; in contrast, in Latin America in general official institutions lack credibility and young people are exploiting social media to engage and participate in politics almost like if it was the only and official means of participation (Valenzuela et al., 2012; Welp & Wheatley, 2012: 199). In this regard, the recent development of civil society occurred in parallel to important changes within the media system in Chile. The information and communications technology (ICT) sector is one of Chile's most dynamics economic industries (Koller et al., 2017: 3).

In structural studies, the rate of NGOs per inhabitant in a country is used as a way of measuring its level of social capital (Irrarrazabal & Streeter, 2017). NGOs have gained some importance in Chile as their activity represents 2 per cent of the country's GDP, having a similar impact on the economy than fishing and hospitality (Irrarrazabal & Streeter, 2017). One of the only reports on civil society activity in Chile shows that more than 234,500 NGOs operate in the country today, which is proportionately more than twice than the number of NGOs in larger nations such as the US and Australia (Irrarrazabal & Streeter, 2017). Actually, a total of 62,140 new NGOs appeared between 2011 and 2015 in Chile (Irrarrazabal & Streeter, 2017). Chile's associational life remains however weak: according to OECD data, Chile counts among the least unionised OECD countries as a result of structural changes implemented in the labour market (Somma, 2012).

In relation to the country's geographical conditions, the elongated territorial shape of Chile and its historically centralised administration have contributed to the isolation of its far Southern regions (Rodríguez et al., 2015). The feeling of abandonment and deficient public services in these regions have led to a rejection of state authorities and shaped relations between the centre

and the regions (Rodríguez et al., 2015). The geographical distribution of conflicts shows that they have spread throughout the country, except in the O'Higgins region in the central part of Chile (Delamaza et al., 2017).

The aforementioned prosperous economics is combined with a fragmented and highly polarised civil society, whose manifestation has been very repressed by the state apparatus during democratic rule (Sorj & Fausto, 2015), all of this despite the consensus that characterised Chile's transition to democracy (Mellado & van Dalen, 2017). All in all, the country is therefore representative of some of most important trends that characterise South America, which are a recent transition to democratic rule, a shift to neoliberal economic models in the 1990s and unresolved deep social inequalities (Álvarez et al., 1998; Garretón, 1999; Somma, 2012). Chile is quite often cited as a textbook example of elite-driven and slow process of democratic consolidation (Foweraker, 2002), as well as the stage of the tension between successful market economic policies and dramatically weak political culture (Madariaga, 2018).

In relation to the rest of the region, Chile offers an interesting case to interpret the movement-media nexus in South America as it had the longest transition to democracy. Chilean social movements seem to be in franc development, moving from partisan co-optation to freer and more radical expression in a highly diversified global media ecology. Due to its characteristics of both developed and developing country, Chile serves as an insightful context to better understand how emerging social movements communicate with their different publics by means of older and newer media outlets and platforms. Furthermore, zooming in the case of environmental and LGBTI+ in Chile, this research enables the development of theoretical insights about media activism in South America and offers a comparison point with more developed countries.

### **3.3.2. Comparative case analysis of two post-materialist movements**

This thesis strives to analyse in what ways and for what reasons SMOs create new media practices. For that purpose, the practices of the environmental and LGBTI+ movements will be compared and contrasted as two interrelated case studies. Adding two cases to a single country case study is modest in terms of

numbers but increases its analytic power. In order to ensure data robustness, this research then compares and contrasts two post-materialist movements (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007: 27). Of particular significance for this study is the fact that research about environmental and LGBTI+ movements in other regions has highlighted their reliance on the collective participation of their beneficiaries and have turned to be two of the most illustrative cases of popular mobilisation across the globe (Castells, 2000: 2-3). They have used different media outlets and platforms in creative ways as well. Yet, the balance between cultural expression and policy advocacy is different in each movement, which raises key questions about how their identity influenced their practices. Both movements have garnered some media attention and embraced new technologies, although their ways to achieve this have been very different. Capturing these nuances is of theoretical relevance for this thesis and justifies this selection for comparative analysis.

The LGBTI+ movement has contested sexual and gender normativity in much of the world, becoming a well-known community standing mostly against binary ideas of family, love and identity, often in connection with feminism (Castells, 2000). The environmental movement is considered a textbook example of a widely supported movement, which has been able to convince most people of its values and win political appeal over the years (Castells, 2000: 3), even if in the end very few are willing to conform to the implications of the movement's demands to contemporary consumerism trends. Campaigners have faced different conditions in Chile due to its conservative culture linked to Catholicism, which affects specifically LGBTI+ movements (Steidl, 2016), and due to its economic model based on the extraction of natural resources, which affects specifically environmental movements (Madariaga, 2018). These two major trends shape post-materialist mobilisation in very specific ways and only a few studies have addressed this in detail. Besides their evident similarities, and potential contrasts, the chief reason why post-materialist movements are the centre of interest of this thesis is related to how they have emerged and sustained themselves in the peculiar sociopolitical conditions of Chile.

Although environmental issues have been part of the public debate in Chile during the dictatorship, it is only since the 1990s that environmental NGOs have been significantly developing, gained power as a political alliance and consolidated its national network (Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 185-193). Lately, this process has been in line with the worldwide internationalisation of the third sector, and local environmental concerns have intersected with the global context (Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 183-184). As a consequence of its development, two strings of groups compose the national environmental movement in Chile. On one side, there are Santiago-based NGOs that have strengthened their ties with the Parliament and have developed technical expertise since many of them are branches of transnational networks (Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 196-198). On the other, there are many organisations based in regions far from Santiago who are linked with grassroots communities and aim to represent the historical struggle of disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 196). While the former is highly professionalised and influential at the political level, the latter has limited internal cohesion and influence over other actors such as MPs, mainstream news media and private companies (Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 196).

Similarly, the presence of the LGBTI+ movement in the public debate in Chile has significantly increased in the 1990s, as demonstrated by the examples of the two most established LGBTI+ NGOs, which have been included in this study as key informants. They have managed to foster public debate around discrimination towards homosexuals and the legal status of same-sex partnerships, and tipped the scale in favour of greater acceptance of homosexuality as a valid lifestyle (ICSO, 2012). However, there are internal divisions as well within the LGBTI+ movement: some factions are strongly based on identity and culture, with interesting synchronisms (Steidl, 2016), while others have become very moderate and focused mainly on achieving policy reform (Encarnación, 2011; 2013).

Another reason to choose these movements is that there is a robust body of social movements and political communication research that has highlighted these two movements' increasing public visibility and their efforts to harness

media for public communication (Encarnación, 2013: 703-707; Santos, 2013: 7-9; Yang, 2003; De Jong, 2005: 111; Krøvel, 2012: 259; Rootes, 2009: 207-208). A number of studies have shown the emphasis that different kinds of environmental activists and SMOs have placed on trying to access representation on the mainstream news media, such as the so-called 'Greenpeace effect' (Martin, 2015) and campaigning via online media (De Jong, 2005: 111; Krøvel, 2012: 259; Rootes, 2009: 207-208; Warkentin, 2001). However, there is still little knowledge about the particularities of their use of social media more specifically, a question that strongly motivates this study.

In summary, there are clear similarities between these two post-materialist movements which are strongly based on identity and known for being media-savvy and highly professionalised. On the other hand, the levels of strategy and identity vary across the environmental and LGBTI+ Movements. Perhaps of importance is to highlight that due to different ideologies these two movements also enact some internal divisions. Concerns around deep ecology and environmental justice are considered more radical than conservationism in the environmental movement (Brulle & Pellow, 2006; Devall, 1980; Naess, 2008; Sills, 1975). Similarly, concerns about gender, identity and culture tend to be marginal within the LGBTI+ community, which overall has prioritised its legal assimilation to society (Butler, 1990; Leachman, 2014).

### **3.4. Research process: Fieldwork, data production and analysis**

This section describes the thesis's research process, step by step, as it was carried out to produce and interpret empirical data to generate theoretical insights about the topic of SMOs and media practices. This description will explain the iteration between data production and interpretation proper of IGT as it occurred during this research process. As outlined in Section 3.3, the first empirical stage was a pilot study that involved interviews with experts and media professionals during a field visit to Santiago in April 2016. This exercise was set out to test the validity of the interview script and obtain non-published knowledge about the research context and the SMOs to be compared. Following grounded theory guidelines in relation to preliminary engagements with data (Charmaz, 2005: 507; 2016; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), this knowledge was used to

inform subsequent sampling and data gathering decisions in two ways. First, it allowed navigating better the current civil society landscape in Chile, and identifying a number of SMOs that could provide high-quality information about the research topic. These informants were the first to be contacted for an interview. Secondly, this step revealed important nuances to be considered between environmental and LGBTI+ movements in Chile, which allowed refining the interview script and including new questions about the cultural and structural particularities of each movement under study (see Appendix 3).

During the aforementioned piloting period, the sample of SMOs to be contacted for the research was prepared. Field work ‘proper’ started on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and ended on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. A second fieldwork period took place almost a year later, between May 9<sup>th</sup> and June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Recapping previous sections in this chapter and Chapter 2, SMOs have been chosen, first, to address gaps in the existing literature, which has over-emphasised leaderless movement networks in recent years, and secondly because of the important role they have played in mobilising civil society in a post-authoritarian country like Chile, which is in line with the NGO professionalisation trends (NGOisation) in South America.

The sample of SMOs for this research is composed of 41 organisations. These specific SMOs were selected using a combination of convenience sampling and then referral sampling. Convenience sampling is a strategy guided in equal measure by theoretical knowledge and practical considerations (Bryman, 2012: 419; Della Porta, 2014: 241). Its main criterion is based on selecting participants in relation to the value of the information they can provide until reaching an acceptable level of theoretical saturation (Della Porta, 2014: 242; Emmel, 2013: 33). It is the most suitable strategy of selection under qualitative research parameters because it does not seek for representativeness but rather quality of information (Bryman, 2012: 416). The most important theoretical concept used to guide convenience sampling was the delimitation of what would be considered an SMO. This decision was made on the basis of resource-mobilisation and political process approaches to collective action, which have included civil society organisations —such as NGOs and unions— within the definition of SMOs in the past (Cohen & Arato, 1992; Kriesi, 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). The

'NGOisation' process of social movements described in Chapter 2, which has been of capital relevance in South American post-materialist activism (Álvarez et al., 1998; Álvarez, 1999), also has treated NGOs as a form of professionalised SMOs (Álvarez, 2009; Lang, 2012).

Grassroots groups, lacking formalisation but well-connected with the movements under study, were also included in the concept of SMO used in this sampling strategy. This is because recent research on hybrid media ecology has made the case of the blurring boundaries between grassroots groups and institutionalised advocacy organisations after the normalisation of CMC platforms (Chadwick, 2007; 2014; Karpf, 2012). As a good example to illustrate this point, the pilot research revealed how many grassroots groups use an institutional name for their Facebook profiles and run crowdfunding strategies online to sustain themselves economically, which makes them resemble NGOs without being officially registered as such (Karpf, 2012). In fact, grassroots groups have been the main object of study of research on activist media practices (Jeppesen et al., 2014; Rodríguez & Miralles, 2014). Also, it was crucial to relativise the legal aspects of SMOs in order to avoid a thesis on NGOs only. The reliance on relevant literature on SMO and NGOisation has informed the decision to exclude political parties and profit-oriented corporations, even if some authors would include them as members of certain social movements (Ahrne, 1996; Cohen & Arato, 1992). So, on this basis, NGOs and grassroots groups are the two types of SMOs to sampled, which should be understood as ranging in a continuum from more to less formalisation and institutionalisation.

The second and more specific step of the sampling strategy was to identify the specific organisations and people to interview. In relation to the organisations, high-profile environmental and LGBTI+ NGOs were already identifiable due this researcher's familiarity with the topic and context. In grounded theory, the use of personal experiences is encouraged as a mechanism to guide a research endeavour, particularly in its early stages (Strauss, 1987: 11). These NGOs and others that were less known were recruited more systematically by means of two public lists of officially registered civil society organisations. In Chile, SMOs obtain the status of 'persona jurídica' (legal entity) once they are

registered in their respective city council as NGO, non-profit corporation, foundation or functional community organisation. This information was retrieved from el ‘Servicio de Registro Civil e Identificación’ (Register Office), which updates a list of legalised non-profit civil society organisations every year<sup>2</sup>. In addition to this, the list of current members of the Chilean Association of NGOs ‘Acción A.G.’, which categorises them according to area, was consulted online<sup>3</sup>; specifically, the environmental and human rights sections.

Once all possible high-profile NGOs in each movement were identified and contacted –which reached a total of 16 environmental and 11 LGBTI+ organisations–, a second step took the form of a referral or snowballing strategy (Neuman, 2014: 273-275). This strategy asked interviewees for further recommendation in regard to new people and therefore organisations to recruit (Bryman, 2012: 203; Burnham et al., 2008). Again, this step was strongly advised by the mechanisms of iteration between collection and analysis set out by constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2005; 2014; Crossley, 2015: 257). Referral sampling was crucial to identify less known NGOs as well as non-formalised SMOs, particularly grassroots groups operating in regions and/or without a website. This was a distinct cluster of SMOs that had not been captured using the lists referred in the above paragraph. Recruitment via referral sampling stopped once enough empirical data were accumulated and could not bring new significant insights, basically when theoretical saturation was reached, which led to recruit 14 organisations, nine environmental and five LGBTI+ SMOs.

The two sampling steps described above covered a specific geographic area of the country, which was established from the beginning based on political and practical issues. As shown in Figure 3.1 (next page), sampling covered four regions in the central area: Coquimbo, Valparaíso, Santiago (Metropolitan region) and O’Higgins. Most of the high-profile environmental and LGBTI+ NGOs

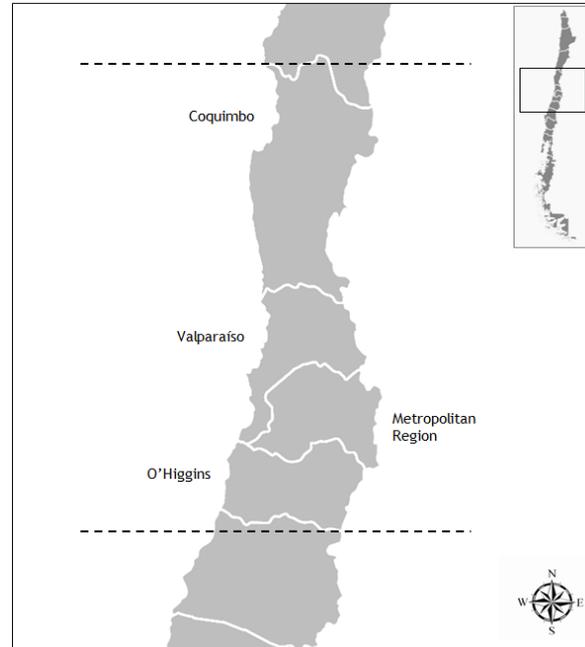
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<sup>2</sup> The list of registered non-profit civil society organisations is available online at: [www.registrocivil.cl/PortalOI/transparencia/index.html](http://www.registrocivil.cl/PortalOI/transparencia/index.html) [Last access: 17/03/2017].

<sup>3</sup> The list of members of Acción A.G. is available online at: <http://accionag.cl/ong-asociadas/temas/agro-y-medio-ambiente> [Last access: 17/03/2017].

operated in Santiago, even though some extended their reach to regions further North and South of the country through affiliated branches and volunteer teams. Three regions near Santiago were included in order to specifically capture the territorial diversity of the environmental movement. As this chapter has shown in Section 3.3., environmental conflicts of different nature have emerged and spread across the Chilean territory in relation to the protection of specific natural resources. For example, Northern Chile is particularly rich in mineral deposits, which has generated various environmental conflicts related to water pollution (Medel et al., 2012: 215; Ulianova & Estenssoro, 2012: 198). Therefore, limiting the scope of this research to the Metropolitan area only would have excluded many environmental SMOs and data to fully capture the activist reality of Chile. Despite this, the study could not expand to more regions beyond the central core shown in the map below due to time and resource constraints, especially considering the distance between cities in a long country like Chile.

Figure 3.1. Scope of fieldwork in Chile, 2016-2017



Source: This map was created using the template [Chile with Regions - Single Color](#) by [FreeVectorMaps.com](#). It contains data from CELADE-ECLAC accessed on 23-08-2018 ([www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/poblacion-y-desarrollo](http://www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/poblacion-y-desarrollo)).

In relation to the interviewees within these organisations, the recruitment was set out according to their expertise in managing PR, media service and communication office tasks in each NGO. Relevant informants, such as Executive Directors and Communication Officers, were identified on NGOs' official websites and contacted directly via e-mail or phone. For a large number of NGOs, speaking with a member of staff in charge of media management was not possible because the head of the organisations wanted to be the interviewee. In the case of grassroots groups, identifying a professional managing the media or a formal director was more challenging. When an organisation lacked an official hierarchical structure, the activist who felt entitled to talk on behalf of a group—and had time to participate in the research—was taken as a spokesperson of the SMO. As a result of these strategies, a total of 43 respondents were successfully recruited for this study (see Table 3.1 on next page; see also Appendix 4 for details about the recruited participants). In some cases, more than one respondent spoke on behalf of one single SMO, and in other cases one participant was key to obtain information about more than one SMO because they had past experiences working for other organisations or because their current organisation was linked to a clustered grassroots group. A total of 36 participants were reached in the first long period of fieldwork, and another seven in the second shorter period.

The mechanisms outlined above have described a move from convenience to snowballing during each fieldwork period, and the use of two separate fieldwork experiences in a year. These procedures were consistent with the principles of IGT, which encouraged successive engagements with data in order to check, compare and refine emerging conceptual abstraction (Charmaz, 2005: 507; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Sampling exhaustion was reached by the end of a second fieldwork period in June 2017. Thus, after this process, the sample encompassed a total of 41 SMOs, 25 of them representing the environmental movement and 16 representing the LGBTI+ movement (see Table 3.1 on next page for more details). Two-thirds of the total environmental SMOs were NGOs (13 in total). Most of these NGOs were concentrated in Santiago with only a few (three in total) operating in neighbouring regions. In contrast, almost half of the environmental grassroots groups were spread regionally. Almost 70 per cent of

the sampled LGBTI+ SMOs were NGOs (11 in total). Virtually all the LGBTI+ SMOs, regardless of their level of institutionalisation, were based in Santiago. Only one LGBTI+ NGO in this sample had its operations in a region of the country. The contrasting geographical distribution between the movements in the sample resonates with the territorial configuration of the environmental movement (Medel et al., 2012), which has been explained in the above paragraphs.

Table 3.1. Breakdown of total sampled SMOs

	Environmental SMOs (25)		LGBT+ SMOs (16)		Total SMOs (41)	
	NGOs	Grassroots	NGOs	Grassroots	NGOs	Grassroots
Santiago (Metropolitan region)	13	5	10	5	23	10
Neighbouring regions (Coquimbo, Valparaíso and O'Higgins)	3	4	1	0	4	4
Total	16	9	11	5	27	14

#### 3.4.1. Methods: Semi-structured interviews and data triangulation

During and after the sampling of SMOs and recruitment of participants, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were carried out. There was only one exception: A respondent based in Valdivia (in Southern Chile, more than 800 kilometres from Santiago) was interviewed via Skype. All the other face-to-face interviews were conducted in offices of the SMOs or in public cafes of the interviewee's preference. They were tape-recorded and notes were taken during and right after each session (Wengraf, 2001: 191). Ethical considerations involved in these two practices are discussed in the next subsection. Details about the interview times and locations can be found in Appendix 4.

A semi-structured interviewing format was chosen because it is one of the most used in qualitative research and it is also often used in grounded theory to gather relevant empirical data about a research topic (Della Porta, 2014: 230). This method sets a situation in which respondents can talk about certain themes and actively construct meaning in relation to the research topic (Della Porta, 2014; Holstein & Gubrium, 1997; Silverman, 1997; Weiss, 2014). Interviews report both interviewees' reflections and interviewers' active interpretations in the form of text, which then constitute the main source of raw data for further

analysis (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997: 122-126). Despite this flexibility, and differently from non-structured interviews, semi-structured interviews establish a set of fixed themes to be applied to a range of people, which is often used for comparisons across them (Wengraf, 2001). As outlined in previous sections, variation has been a significant factor that has prompted this thesis' question, and thus comparisons across interviews –and across SMOs– has been an important reason to use this method. In fact, semi-structured interviews have been extensively used in social movement studies, mainly because they capture commitment and participation dynamics, reflections on collective experiences, and mobilisation processes (Della Porta, 2014).

In relation to the interview script, semi-structured interviews offer certain level of control during the session with a number of prepared questions that, in this case, were applied to all interviewees (Wengraf, 2001: 1-5). Accordingly, my interview script was designed to explore three major themes. The first theme was the general communications approach of a given SMO, including various questions about their most important publics and interactions, and how they have used the media for these goals. The second theme addressed today's media ecology, querying participants about their reflections on the ecology in which they were inserted and the opportunities it has opened for their organisations in relation to access different publics and media formats. Finally, the third theme explored possible combinations of conventional media practices and, when possible, experiences of developing what they considered new ways of using various media for clear-cut goals. The detailed schedule can be consulted in the Appendix 3.

The interview sessions were however flexible and open to improvisation for the sake of capturing the depth and context of the information during the application of the aforementioned script of themes (Bryman, 2012: 470; Jones, 1985: 46; Wengraf, 2001: 1-5). Semi-structured scripts often include prompts to both add questions in reaction to the answers and suggest themes that are not spontaneously covered in these answers (Gillham, 2005). Accordingly, the script changed as the research progressed. The first way in which the script changed was related to the request of organisational information to interviewees. As

explained at the beginning of this section, formalised and well-known NGOs were included in the first round of interviews. There was abundant information about these organisations on the news media, the internet and non-published literature. Consequently, these interviews could be prepared in advance and there were a few questions about their organisational structure. On the contrary, as the research progressed, and reached less known NGOs and grassroots groups, it became more difficult to collate organisational information about less known NGOs and grassroots groups. Therefore, more information had to be queried about SMOs' objectives and activist agenda, their evaluation of their current financial situation as good or precarious, and their organisational chart.

The second way in which the script changed relates to the fact that the initial interviews provided clear clues to follow about the creation of new media practices. For example, from the beginning the interviews signalled the creation of four distinct media practices (see Chapter 4). Consequently, towards the end of the research process, questions about the four types of media practices that emerged from early analysis were framed as such and formulated more directly to the interviewees. In this regard, the interviews were more explorative at the beginning of the first trip and became more focused and directed by the end of the second fieldwork period. This strategy responds to the logics of IGT where the first set of data was used to refine subsequent questions and queries (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 14-15).

Ultimately, the evolution of the interview script as described above enabled the development of theoretical sensitivity from the very beginning of the research process, and helped fine-tune these emerging theories through an iterative process of reconfirmation of the assumptions made at the early stage of interviewing (Corbin & Strauss, 2008: 120; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007: 25; Peters, 2014: 11; Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 15). These readjustments helped reflect about potential categories and led to formulate more directed questions about these categories. As a result of this process, and to summarise, the interviews were systematically interpreted in order to find relevant statements that could demonstrate the following points: a) a description of how new hybrid media practices have been created, and in relation to what communication

goals; b) showing when SMOs have been aware that they have been creating new hybrid media practices, in contrast with when they have lacked this level of awareness; and c) reflections about the hybrid media ecology in which respondents' organisations were embedded, and how it has influenced their communication goals. These statements were later grouped into different categories, such as four distinct types of hybrid media practices (see Chapter 4 for this level of comparative analysis), three organisational responses to hybrid media practices (see Chapter 5), and the cultural and structural differences across the two broader social movements under study (see Chapter 6).

Complementing insights from interviews, the research process included the analysis of public documents produced by the sampled SMOs. To be precise, documents are defined in social research as a form of texts, both print and electronic, employed by social entities –such as the organisations under study– to compose self-representation (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011: 57; Bowen, 2009: 27). A total of 79 documents produced by environmental SMOs, and another 57 documents produced by LGBTI+ SMOs, were considered for my analysis. These documents included the following items: annual reports; publications; brochures and leaflets; posters, banners and prints in general; websites and weblogs; and finally, social media profiles and posts. A detailed list of all the collected and assessed documents can be found in Appendix 5.

Document analysis is the systematic evaluation of documents in order to elicit meaning and gain a better understanding of an empirical matter (Bowen, 2009: 27). Document analysis is often applied to qualitative case studies in combination with interviews for triangulation of data (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2014). Triangulation is basically the addition of more sources of information that help strengthen the arguments proposed about a case (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2014). It thus gives the opportunity to double check findings in order to clean out possible biases present in one method (Seale, 2016: 473). This means that findings suggested by the interview data were then tested in official SMO documentation to ensure that there were no forced interpretations, and also helped add more information about the topics developed by the respondents. Consequently, this

assessment contributed with an additional layer of data to the interviews, being in line with conceptual saturation precepts of constructivist GT (Charmaz, 2005).

In this study, document analysis involved for the most part synthesising the materials and producing data in the form of quotations (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011). Besides qualification, it also included a quantification of frequencies of different key concepts and presentation of these data in charts and graphs. This method can also de-construct documents to gain insights about how they were constructed in the first place and what claims were formulated, which helps understand better their producers' communication goals (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011). Research on activist media practices has established a canon in this regard. Crossley (2015), Jeppesen et al. (2014) and Mattoni (2012) have triangulated interviews with documents to produce an enhanced snapshot of SMOs' use of the media. The research here follows a similar rationale for assessing SMO documents.

More specifically, the analysis of SMO documentation, used for chapters 4, 5 and 6, was carried out in three ways. First, as discussed above, documents offered insights about how certain media were produced (Atkinson, 2005). This is why hard copies of magazines, brochures and leaflets produced by the organisations under study were collated during the interview session with their representatives. Having these documents was important to have evidence that a number of SMOs have created their own alternative media outlets (i.e. magazines), which have played a function in some hybrid media practices such as *multi-layered marketing campaigns* (see Chapter 4). This evidence also proved that certain SMOs had the resources to produce these media, which was especially relevant considering that information on annual budgets could not be always accessed.

Secondly, and more systematically than the first assessment, the collection of online reports, publications and websites published by the SMOs was used for triangulation of organisational data about SMOs (Bowen, 2009: 28). Collated together, these documents produced a database of SMOs' goals and principles. In this way, it was possible to confirm SMOs' objectives and main activist agenda, ideological stance, their self-evaluated financial situation and their

organisational chart. The most frequently mentioned concepts in this database were counted with the use of NVivo, and different tables and graphs were generated from this to show the dominant ideas and their relation to ideology and ethics. To forewarn the reader about the use of quantification in an eminently qualitative research, it is important to highlight exploration, triangulation and data visualisation. Little is known about how SMOs' organisational patterns are correlated with the creation of hybrid media practices. There were no expectations built from the literature and therefore some exploration was required in this regard. A more quantitative approach was deemed as appropriate for such an exploratory triangulation. Frequencies were thus calculated in order to identify majoritarian trends that could help cluster SMOs together according to emerging categories. The use of charts and graphs also helped the reader to visualise these frequencies in a way that could be comparative across different levels of analysis (i.e. different types of SMOs or across movements). The resulting tables will be presented and discussed in more detail in chapters 5 and 6.

The third way of triangulating with documents took place after the second fieldwork, once insights about hybrid media practices were obtained from the interviews. It assessed SMOs' official Facebook and Twitter profiles and posts. These entries were treated as documents in this analysis due to the exclusion of content posted by users other than the SMOs under study. Arguably, the use of social media for research starts being 'online ethnography' –namely the participant observation of interactions between users– once the interactive aspect of these platforms is taken into account to draw conclusions about identity, power and other socio-physiological phenomena (Markham, 2005: 794-796). Since this study is not focused on the effectiveness of SMOs' media strategies, it has not observed user interaction as a result of SMOs' activities on social media. Instead, the analysis has paid attention to three very specific aspects for triangulation of data. First, it processed the main description or 'about us' retrieved from SMOs' Facebook and Twitter profiles, which was added to the dataset of SMOs' mission, vision, objectives and principles statements prepared from other documents such as annual reports and websites.

Secondly, the assessment counted the total Facebook posts and tweets in a random month –between 1 and 30 of September of 2017– as a way to determine the extent of use of CMC platforms of each sampled SMO. This evaluation helped make insightful relations between scarce or no use of social media and resistance to hybrid media practices, and between high use of these platforms and innovative responses. Thirdly, taking into account the same sampled posts of September 2017, the analysis looked into the content of these entries to identify the use of two types of hybrid media practices to be discussed in Chapter 4: *selective news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting*. More specifically, it assessed if SMOs included a reference or link to published news stories in their posts, and if they tagged (hereafter, the ‘@’ function) journalists and news media outlets’ profiles in these posts. More details about this procedure will be presented in Section 4.3 of this thesis, in the next chapter.

Finally, the choice of September 2017 for social media analysis responded to the triangulation goal outlined in this subsection and was instrumental to the practicalities associated to this goal. As stated in the previous paragraph, this third way of triangulating with documents took place after the preliminary analysis of interview data. Once four distinct hybrid media practices were understood, it was necessary to take a look at how the studied SMOs were using their Facebook and Twitter accounts and thus determine whether there were attempts to blend different practices in their posts. Thanks to this assessment, it was possible from the outset to find a lack of narrative about *selective news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting* in an important number of SMOs, and reveal how this silence contrasted the actual use of social media for those purposes. To illustrate this better, the above contrast was crucial to elaborate on emulative behaviour (see Chapter 5), a concept borrowed from organisational theory after the data were collected and analysed for this research.

Now, the choice of a seemingly random month in the context of a non-probabilistic data analysis is not free of problems. A random month certainly suggests objectivity but also decontextualises the data to the point that it undermines an interpretative endeavour. It is likely that certain events were taking place during that month, which could not occur in other circumstances. It

is also likely that such events made one of the social movement use social media more intensively than the other. However, the goal was not to compare who used social media the most but rather understand what kind of use they gave to social media and how this helps explain media hybridity better. Furthermore, we should remember that the two social movements under study were selected for a very particular reason: their stability and growth over time. Thus, only one month of social media activity does not necessarily capture the complexity of the context in Chile as many political trends faced by these SMOs have developed over the long term. I must finally emphasise that the need for exploring social media usage made sense in September 2017 because I was already back from the second fieldwork (June) and finished the transcription and preliminary analysis of interview material. In this sense, by September the analysis was still malleable and ready to be triangulated with new material. The task turned out to be quite time consuming, and although originally it included a longer timeframe, the analysis showed satisfactory results in only 30 days.

#### **3.4.2. Ethics: Consent, anonymity and confidentiality**

This last subsection outlines the main strategies undertaken to address the ethical concerns associated with the thesis' research process. These concerns refer mainly to data production, storage and handling. The interaction between a researcher and human participants entails diverse ethical risks, such as violating rights to voluntary and consented participation, breaching confidentiality and anonymity, and deceiving respondents via inaccurate instructions or general misinformation (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Bryman, 2012: 153-154). For this reason, social research requires a strict corpus of ethical principles regarding the treatment of people as objects of inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The ethics frameworks of the Economic and Social Research Council – ESRC (2016), the Ethics Committee of the College of Social Sciences of the University of Glasgow – UoG (2016), and the Association of Internet Researchers – AoIR (2012) guide this thesis. The first two institutions govern social sciences in the UK and the University of Glasgow more specifically, whereas the AIR provides special advice on the use of online content. These standards were met by following the necessary procedures to obtain participants'

informed consent to take part in this research; avoid any form of deception; guarantee their anonymity; and ensure the confidentiality of certain information.

Consent is the principle guiding the voluntary participation of individuals in research activities (ESRC, 2016; UoG, 2016). Voluntary participation means a decision free of coercion and based upon full and open information (Christians, 2005: 144). Deception occurs when participants do not receive complete information prior to accepting being interviewed (Bryman, 2012: 153; Christians, 2005: 145). Ethical research should therefore deliver accurate information to reduce the risk of misinformation (Jones, 1985). For this purpose, an information sheet and a consent form in Spanish were handed to Chilean interviewees before any recorded interview would take place (Christians, 2005: 145). Following UoG's templates, these documents reported the objectives, methods and procedures of the study, and informed the ethical and safety issues involved in participating as an interviewee. They explained the possibility to withdraw at any moment, and due to any circumstance, as well as all the measures taken to prevent exposition of identity (Della Porta, 2014; Gillham, 2005: 78). The information sheet and consent form can be consulted in Appendices 1 and 2, respectively. By means of these documents, research participants were properly informed, and their signature implied they accepted to participate voluntarily.

Respecting confidentiality and anonymity of research subjects is related to safeguarding the identity of people and locations from unwanted exposure (Christians, 2005: 145). In order to anonymise the data, descriptive labels were used to refer to research participants in the thesis. These labels state the profession or position of a given interviewee within an SMO, the social movement and the type of SMO she, he or they represent, and finally the city where the SMO is based. For example, 'Media Officer of environmental SMO based in Santiago'. Thus, all personal data were removed here and in any publication arising from this research. Original identifiers were stored in secure key-locked locations and access to hard-drives, emails, clouding and USB gadgets were password-protected during the research and writing process (UoG, 2016).

Finally, in relation to the use of online information for this analysis, only publicly available documents were sampled. Appendix 5 describes the type and

number of documents collected and analysed for each group of SMOs. Online documents included SMO websites and official social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter profiles). SMOs' websites are public and do not contain confidential content, therefore some of their information was cited when necessary but without disclosing the name of the organisation. Unlike websites, social media contain information published by SMOs along with posts from their community members. This made it necessary to request permission beforehand to observe and retrieve information from SMOs' public social media profiles using a written consent form (see Appendix 2). Regarding the use of Facebook and Twitter, posts from followers of the sampled organisations were excluded from the analysis and thus not cited in any form in this thesis. This is because this thesis aims to have a general understanding of how social media are used by SMOs, specifically in relation to what they can control which is their own profiles and not the content posted by other users. This procedure is also informed by academic debates on consent and anonymity; many studies collecting data from Twitter and Facebook assume that having a public and open profile on social media grants consent to having it harvested and archived, but in most cases avoid coding real names or disclosing personally identifiable and locational information from quotes (AoIR, 2012: 6-8; Markham, 2005; Reilly & Trevisan, 2015: 431; Zimmer, 2010: 322-324; Zimmer & Proferes, 2014: 258).

### **3.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the research design of the thesis, which was used to select, gather, process, interpret and triangulate data in relation to the research question: In what ways and for what reasons have SMOs created new media practices in a rapidly changing media ecology, and why have these practices varied across different SMOs? First, the chapter presented the epistemological decisions made in order to design the methodology of this research. It outlined why a constructivist approach, building on precepts of informed grounded theory (IGT) under pragmatic parameters, was most suitable for this research topic. It concluded that IGT helps generate emerging theoretical insights from dense empirical data about a research topic that has been poorly examined in the existing literature. Major theoretical and empirical gaps in the analysis of SMOs

and media practices in the Global South have made it difficult to work on hypotheses, and therefore motivated the use of IGT. Subsequently, the chapter outlined the rationale for using a single country as a case study. This research strategy in particular has made it possible for this IGT-oriented project to produce a very focused and in-depth examination of one case, which generated a large amount of contextualised data for relevant comparisons that could facilitate the emergence of theory about SMOs and the creation of new media practices. In this sense, this part of the chapter also justified the selection of Chile and its environmental and LGBTI+ movements on the basis of their singularity and empirical gaps in the existing literature.

The chapter documented the case of Chilean movements in some detail to have background information about the chosen cases. As a result of a long-standing repression and demobilisation product of the dictatorship and elite-driven democratic transition, civil society has developed slowly in Chile. Associational ties have been weak, and social movements have re-emerged only recently in Chile, which make a contrast with its economic success and democratic consolidation. This is the context where environmental and LGBTI+ movements started to become influential since the 1990s in the country. Differently from other countries, Chile has also been influenced by the NGOisation trends affecting most South American countries. These trends have professionalised and institutionalised movements, which has left little room for spontaneity and powerful grassroots activity. The chapter concluded by providing some transparency as to how the research was conducted. It explained the criteria to sample Chilean SMOs and then mixed qualitative methods used to collect and use empirical data: semi-structured interviews and triangulation with document and social media analysis. It also commented on the ethical procedures involved in carrying out interviews with human participants and observation of online data.

Overall, the research process described in this chapter has made evident the importance of the movement's identity in understanding the ways the media are used by SMOs. It has emphasised the singular sociopolitical conditions of Chile, where activists struggle to communicate with relevant publics in a

demobilised environment. These conditions are certainly changing at the pace of democratic consolidation of the country, however have situated movement activity at the crossroads of political repression and advanced media ecology, which is a key dimension that characterises Chile as an insightful case. These factors provide a unusual context for the study of activist media practices, which is the topic be explored in detail in the next three empirical chapters.

## Chapter 4. Multiple and horizontal interactions: SMOs' creation of new hybrid media practices

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter is the first of three empirical chapters that will examine the thesis' findings in order to address the research question introduced in Chapter 1. It is focused on the first part of this question, which is: In what ways and for what reasons have SMOs created new media practices in a rapidly changing media ecology? The analysis is based on the interpretation of interviews with SMOs' representatives, in triangulation with an assessment of SMO social media profiles. Thus, the chapter finds that nearly all the sampled Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs have created new media practices, and they have done so in order to expand their communicative reach and interact with a diversified range of publics. Another key finding is that the creation of new practices takes place when SMOs blend and repurpose different conventional media practices in novel and hybrid ways. This argument partly builds on overarching scholarly debates highlighted in Chapter 2 about SMOs and mediated activism. Some scholars have posited that after the normalisation of the internet, the boundaries between offline and online, mainstream and alternative media, have been blurred in today's media practices (Chadwick, 2014; Mattoni & Treré, 2014). Adding to this literature, the analysis of this chapter confirms that, just like leaderless movement networks, SMOs also play an important role in the development of new 'hybrid' media practices. This point thus illustrates how the processes of combining and repurposing media practices have shaped SMOs' communication goals in mid-income post-authoritarian countries of South America.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. The first section explains the mechanics behind the creation of new media practices, which serves the purpose of setting the ground for further analysis. It contends that technically SMOs do not start from an empty canvass but rather develop 'hybrid' media practices, which are defined in this thesis as specific combinations of offline and online communication technologies; traditional and unconventional routines of production and consumption of information; and mainstream and alternative

media content. In simpler words, hybrid media practices combine different elements of conventional practices in new ways and use them most often during mobilisation efforts and campaigns. The conceptualisation of hybrid media practices is one of the major contributions of this chapter because it illustrates better how SMOs create practices that did not exist before. The concept also adds to emerging literatures on media praxis and ecology as the notion of hybridity has been used to describe today's media ecology in general but not to characterise the activist media practices within this ecology. The second section of this chapter goes more in detail about hybrid media practices by outlining four types of these practices found in the data: *selective news feeds*; *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*; *citizen editorial committees*; and *multi-layered marketing campaigns*. These distinct practices range from less to more complexity in relation to the number of technologies, routines and types of content they combine. Setting out this typology is another of the most important contributions of this thesis.

The final section addresses the most common reason for SMOs to create new hybrid media practices. After four types of media practices have been presented, analytic induction has been conducted to establish the most common patterns across them. The main argument presented in this part is that SMOs create them to reach various publics and hold multiple interactions at the same time, which is now possible through one integrated action rather than several separate media practices for each public like it was in the recent past. Since SMOs diversify their reach, in most cases they also intensify their engagement with their constituents, which ultimately depends on the variant of hybrid media practices they have engaged with. Consequently, another common reason behind the adoption of hybrid media practices is including SMO constituents in their communicative efforts in some capacity. Computer-mediated communication (CMC) platforms seem key to garner feedback from constituents who contributed to the creation of activist messages. These technologies allow SMOs to move back and forth and switch rapidly between broadcasting and two-way communication during the course of one action. Existing studies have highlighted NGOs' increasing diversification of publics but have not accounted for their growing interest in participatory communication. The findings presented in this

section add to this literature by highlighting how today's hybrid media ecology has broadened and intensified SMOs' social interactions.

#### **4.2. What is new? Assembling conventional media practices in novel ways**

This section will outline in general terms how Chilean SMOs create new media practices, and more specifically what is defined here as 'hybrid' media practices. This will be then used in subsequent chapters for a more in-depth comparative analysis of SMOs in relation to the development of new media practices. As set out in Chapter 3, the interview script used in this research, even if flexible, asked a set of questions to all participants in relation to their use of different media platforms and outlets for their activist communication goals (see Appendix 3). Some of these questions were more open-ended and invited SMOs' representatives to describe their media routines overall. After a first set of interviews were analysed, new questions were more directed and included examples of how the media ecology and media practices are in constant transformation due to new technologies (i.e. intermedia agenda-setting, as explained in Subsection 2.2.3), which helped make the topic more tangible. In consequence, respondents' narratives about the creation of new media practices emerged naturally in most cases, but it was also inferred when necessary. Thus, the conceptualisation of new media practices was empirically grounded.

The aforementioned procedure helped obtain a general narrative that revealed how SMOs' spokespersons struggled to explain the emergence of a media practice they considered new or ground-breaking without referring to aspects of conventional practices that have been modified during the process. This has contributed to establish the argument that a combination of objects and actions in conventional media practices is what gives birth to new practices, because this combination reshapes the original form and purpose of these conventional practices but also gives them certain continuity over time. Further in this argument, it appears that the process of creation of new media practices in the field of activism –and by extension other fields of human activity– requires an interaction with what is already available in the media ecology. In other words, new media practices do not appear from spontaneous generation.

Consequently, taking into account how interviewees reflected on the research topic, my thesis suggests referring to new media practices as ‘hybrid’.

The idea of ‘hybrid’ present in new media practices is based on various existing literatures, and this finding thus adds to arguments developed in such theories. Firstly, in relation to the ‘hybridity turn’ in mediated activism studies (see Section 2.2), the use of new activist media practices among social movements has been situated in the context of an hybrid media ecology, although without directly qualifying these practices as hybrid (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Jeppesen et al., 2014; Treré & Mattoni, 2016). Therefore, this thesis offers an insightful conceptualisation in this sense, which takes a step further in something already suggested by all these studies: new activist media practices in this complex ecology have tended to integrate various media objects and processes and thus combine two major logics of communication together, which are broadcasting (or one-to-many) and two-ways interaction (Chadwick, 2013; Karpf, 2017; Mattoni & Treré, 2014). The term ‘hybrid’ comes then to capture today’s conditions of media convergence and its transformative effect on older logics of producing and consuming information, where logics encompass technological platforms, behaviours and organisational structures associated to the media, among other factors (Chadwick, 2013: 3-4).

Secondly, the argument advanced above also makes sense regarding what we learned from organisational theory in Chapter 2. March (1991) has contended that change of organisational behaviour is triggered not only by exploring new opportunities but also exploiting existing ones in flexible ways. Therefore, in their adoption of existing elements such as technologies, organisations will extend, refine and transform them in accordance to their specific objectives (Cantarello et al., 2012; Levinthal & March, 1981; March, 1991). Conclusively, it could have not been expected that new media practices were completely original, de-contextualised or unrelated to conventional media objects and actions. This connects with a third point related to the relative importance of Giddens’s structuration theory (1984) today, because the above claim implies that SMOs were the first agents who created and institutionalised today’s

conventional media practices. As stated on Chapter 3, modifying media practices thus requires a dualistic interaction between SMOs and their media ecology.

In relation to aforementioned points about media objects and actions, it is helpful to describe the process of combination of logics in more detail. Media objects are basically technologies to generate content, and actions are the routines to produce this information (Mattoni, 2012; Mattoni & Treré, 2014). More specifically, then, new practices emerge from specific combinations between objects, namely, offline and online communication technologies, and between actions, which range from traditional to unconventional routines of production, consumption and evaluation of information, and from mainstream and alternative media content. As stated here, combinations occur between objects and actions, but also across them. Employing the metaphor of a mosaic, this means that new practices are composed of several parts that SMOs find in their media ecology and have used with some frequency. Thus far, this idea is rather abstract, but it helps understand the conceptual underpinnings of a discussion to become much more empirically grounded henceforth.

A key aspect to highlight in relation to new hybrid media practices is the tension between stability and transformation. The different SMO representatives' narratives gathered for this analysis stressed the importance of finding a new way of what Chadwick (2013: 56) calls 'tapping and steering' media practices that have been used before, or are well-known in their movement field. In other words, activists would be creating new information flows that 'modify, enable or disable' those older flows on which these new ones were built (Chadwick, 2013: 56). This tends to highlight transformation but certainly not everything is repurposed in the process; many respondents put an emphasis on a routine or technology that must stay as it is or was for the hybrid media practice to make sense. For example, any action attempting to shape the news agenda must respect part of the media logic, even if press releases have fallen into disuse. This would be the stability part in the interaction between agency and pre-existing structure (Giddens, 1984). In a nutshell, conventional media practices get partly reproduced when they are used for complex assemblages. Furthermore, SMOs' new hybrid media practices seem to range from less to more

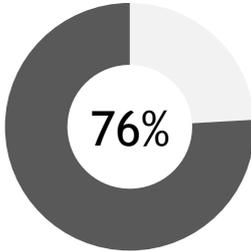
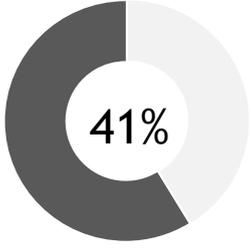
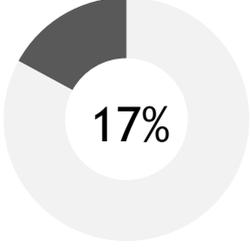
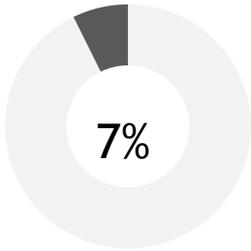
complexity depending on the number of technologies, routines and types of content they accumulate and blend. Increasing sophistication is an aspect to be examined in detail in the following part, which accounts for four distinct new hybrid media practices that the Chilean SMOs under study have created in their contemporary communication efforts between 2016 and 2017.

To conclude this introductory part, one could assert that environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs have for the most part moved along the range of new practices of the hybrid media ecology, and this particular ecology seems to be pervasive in Chile. A total of 37 out of 41 SMOs have adopted hybrid media practices and therefore combined and repurposed objects and actions present in conventional practices in novel ways. This proportion represents 90 per cent of the sample. This also means that a total of four SMOs, all of them part of the Chilean environmental movement, did not have experiences with the creation of new hybrid media practices, for reasons to be explored in detail in the next chapter.

### 4.3. Four distinct new ‘hybrid’ media practices in Chilean activism

According to the analysis of interviews with SMO representatives, in triangulation with an observation of the sampled organisations’ use of social media and websites over a month of activity, this study has found four types of hybrid media practices. These are: *selective news feeds*, *intermedia agenda-setting*, *citizen editorial committees*, and *multi-layered marketing*. Each one of these hybrid practices has its own communication logic, which means a specific goal connected to a set of routines, contents and combinations of media platforms and outlets. Table 4.1 (next page) charts the practices with a description of their characteristics and rate of adoption among the sampled SMOs. This finding addresses how SMOs create new hybrid media practices and subsequently will permeate a more in-depth analysis of the different reasons for SMOs to do this. It will also inform a further assessment of variations across organisations since each hybrid media practice serves a specific communication purpose and entails a particular level of complexity in the form of versions. Table 4.1 compares the proportion of environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs that adopt each of the four hybrid media practices, which from the outset helps shaping an idea around how each social movement develops these new practices.

Table 4.1. Four types of hybrid media practices created by Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs

Hybrid media practice	Rate of SMO adoption (n)	Description
Selective news feeds	 <p>76%</p> <p>31 out of 41 SMOs 16 environmental SMOs 15 LGBTI+ SMOs</p>	Aiming to raise awareness among constituents and prompt online discussion for the collective creation of mobilising frames, SMOs distribute news items published by the mainstream media that are relevant for their constituency. The distribution takes place on social media, and posts include some remarks or direct calls to online followers to share, comment on, and rate or challenge mainstream information about movement issues.
Intermedia agenda-setting efforts	 <p>41%</p> <p>17 out of 41 SMOs 9 environmental SMOs 8 LGBTI+ SMOs</p>	Aiming to attract journalistic attention, SMOs attempt to generate viral amplification of topics on social media. It constitutes a less conventional newsmaking strategy that partly replaces press releases with user-generated content that might be cited in the mainstream news, which ultimately might set out indirect interactions with more constituents, opinion leaders and decision-makers who consume the news.
Online editorial committees	 <p>17%</p> <p>7 out of 41 SMOs 3 environmental SMOs 4 LGBTI+ SMOs</p>	Aiming to discuss and coordinate future communicative actions with the inclusion of some constituents, SMOs generate semi-private virtual conversations via e-mail, mobile chat or messaging. These conversations function as face-to-face editorial committees with a twist: these are more participatory and can be joined remotely.
Multi-layered marketing campaigns	 <p>7%</p> <p>3 out of 41 SMOs One environmental SMO 2 LGBTI+ SMOs</p>	Aiming to sustain high-impact long-term campaigns in tune with constituents' preferences, SMOs advertise different branding products (merchandising, publications, posters) on social media, and apply users' feedback to modify mobilising messages delivered via these products. Once the products are acquired by people and become visible in the streets, SMOs document users' experiences with such products and share them on social media further.

#### 4.3.1. Selective news feeds

The first type of hybrid media practice created by the Chilean SMOs in this study is *selective news feeds*, which fundamentally aims to entice bottom-up collective discourse and mobilise SMO constituents. It is arguably the most common and simplest of the four practices, which combines some aspects of the use of mainstream news media and user-generated content on CMC platforms. More specifically, it consists of selecting and transferring news content retrieved from mainstream media to SMOs' social media communities (pages and groups they created on Facebook, Twitter and the alike) for information, publicity and discussion purposes. The label *selective news feeds* has been coined in the thesis to better describe what seven interviewees in total have put forward about this transfer of content. *News feeds* are the primary systems through which users gain exposure to updates posted by others on Facebook (Valenzuela, 2013: 922), and thus enter into digitally enabled conversations or fora between citizens, often of a political nature (Howard & Hussain, 2013: 39; Wells, 2015). The adjective *selective* has been added after news feeds in order to highlight SMOs' purposeful selection of news content to be shared online.

Once drawn from interview data, this practice has been later confirmed as a relatively stable pattern through observation of the sampled SMOs' use of Facebook and Twitter during 30 days in September 2017. Those SMOs posting two or more references to a press article during this period of time were classified as adopters of *selective news feeds*. Most of these references took the form of a direct quotation of published news content, a scan/photo of a print article and/or a link to a news item published online. As a result of these assessments, the thesis has found that 31 out of 41 SMOs adopted this practice, which represents three-quarters of the sample (see Table 4.1, previous page). This table also shows how the practice is more widespread among LGBTI+ than environmental SMOs. In fact, virtually all LGBTI+ SMOs adopted this practice, whereas two-thirds of environmental SMOs have done so. Table 4.2 (below) shows that, in average, LGBTI+ SMOs tended to use *selective news feeds* more intensively. Posts connected to an external news item do not represent more than 20 per cent of environmental SMOs' Facebook activity in 30 days, whereas they reach more than one-quarter of LGBTI+ SMOs' activity. Table 4.2 below also

illustrates that this contrast is similar in the case of Twitter. As explained in Chapter 3, a month of activity is helpful to get a sense of general trends across the studied SMOs, but in any case it should be taken as a probabilistic representation of social media usage.

Table 4.2. Average percentage of social media posts connected to external news articles in a month<sup>4</sup>

	Twitter	Facebook
Environmental SMOs	6%	20%
LGBTI+ SMOs	12%	27%

According to the interview data, SMOs predominantly arrange *selective news feeds* in two main steps. The first step is to engage in a publicity strategy in an attempt to gain coverage in the mainstream news media, which translates into a mention of their activities or a quoted statement in a published or broadcasted news item. However, not all SMOs do this; a few may alternatively limit themselves to scan the mainstream news agenda (e.g. monitoring the main newspapers and broadcasting stations in a day) to find items that address a movement issue deemed as relevant to their constituents. The second step is to share this ‘external’ media content on SMOs’ social media communities, most often via posts on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram. To reiterate what has been explained earlier, these posts normally include a quote from or link to the original source and a comment that adds to the news content being shared. Compared to the hybrid media practices to be discussed later, *selective news feeds* is the simplest one because it combines the logics of only two conventional practices, and in fact may or may not require the use of newsmaking strategies as a prior step.

The above variations in how this practice is used start indicating more than one reason for SMOs to adopt hybrid media practices in general. In this regard, it is possible to see how, firstly, *selective news feeds* are used to raise awareness about certain issues of interest for SMO constituencies, particularly for those

<sup>4</sup> Calculations based on the total of social media posts between 1 and 30 of September 2017.

already convinced and supporting a given cause. When this is the ultimate goal, SMOs explore the news agenda to select and share relevant pieces published by journalists and columnists to their online followers. The spokesperson of an LGBTI+ SMO explains this in terms of community-building potentials:

*“It’s important to raise awareness about certain news, for example that same-sex marriage was legalised in a given country, or that an actress has come out, because this information shows to young people amidst the process of coming out that there’re positive referents, there’s hope and that progress is made in this world”*

Participant 7b: Communication Officer of LGBTI+ grassroots group based in Santiago, August 2016.

Related to the above goal, the process of carefully picking up external material to be distributed online seems to be of capital importance for mobilisation. Selectiveness matters when some news sources produce resistance among SMO constituents.

*“Our posts [on social media] have always tried to disseminate our activities but also share news about sexual diversity and interactive images that seem interesting, everything in order to keep our community informed about what’s happening regarding sexual diversity at the national level [...] we don’t really apply filters about what we post and what we don’t [regarding the original source], but sometimes we’ve published something that hasn’t been of the like of some of our members and in those cases we’ve decided to change it collectively”*

Participant 4b: Spokesperson of LGBTI+ grassroots group based in Santiago, May 2017.

The analysis of the studied SMOs’ use of social media shows that when they distribute external news information for awareness purposes only, this

information is shared with little edition and offering a link or reference to the original source, because the final objective is to keep their followers up to date about the evolution of a topic. In this regard, creating an always-accessible ‘repository’ of news information online seems relevant for some SMOs. A respondent asserts that her organisation often shares on Facebook the link to access live interviews they have given to the radio as this allows them to leave a permanent record of this coverage (Participant 12a).

A second reason to use *selective news feeds* is to publicise SMOs’ work and vision along with informing about an issue of relevance to the social movement community in question. When this is the case, SMOs have previously worked on their visibility as journalistic sources in the mainstream news media, and then added comments on their social media posts so their followers could understand that these items have quoted or referenced them directly. For example, an LGBTI+ SMO has tried to validate itself as a news source with some difficulty due to its focus on transgender and feminist issues, which were resisted by the general population and even within the male gay-dominated LGBTI+ community in Chile. Thus, when they have managed to gain some coverage, they have not been necessarily satisfied with the result (Participant 8b). This is because of the importance they placed to build a good image that they could later use for publicity reasons. This case is explained in more detail below:

*“[On one occasion] a journalist made a copy-paste of the [press release] we sent him, without editing it. We had to tell him that for next time he should try better because we want good articles about us that we can share to our network (online)”*

Participant 8b: Programme Advisor of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago and Communication Officer of national LGBTI+ movement network, July 2016.

Finally, a third goal related to *selective news feeds* is to produce mobilising frames and movement discourse collectively by reinforcing online discussion between constituents. This is also the political function played by digital news

feeds that most political communication scholars have paid attention to in their studies of digitally enabled activism (Howard & Hussain, 2013; Wells, 2015). This action implies a step further in the efforts to build a movement community. For this, SMOs shared news items that may or may not mention them as sources but invariably edited their posts heavily so they could express an idea along with it, evaluate the shared information or make direct calls to followers to comment below, share it with their friends, and like or rate it. A number of SMOs were interested in evidence-based discussion with and between constituents, for which the news provided them with a solid argumentative basis for further engagements. One respondent argued that her environmental SMO has faced scepticism and criticism from followers in relation to the campaign information they often published about endemic species conservation in Southern Chile (Participant 28a). Therefore, in order to make their claims more valid, the organisation had to respond with links to external information published by news media and specialised publications (Participant 28a). This action does not only suggest a high level of interaction between SMOs and online followers but also a tendency towards using followers' feedback to continuously reshape the way in which organisations like this one use their social media accounts.

The community-building goal explained above illustrates very clearly the crucial role of CMC platforms in *selective news feeds*. These platforms allow SMOs to tailor their messages in favour or against content published by mainstream news outlets, which very often triggers some subsequent discussion online. But most importantly, as one interviewee puts it, because due to their mass reach and interactivity affordances, social media allow people to comment and participate quickly and even more after being exposed to crucial news information (Participant 10b). In relation to this, SMOs seem to expect that their followers will 'personalise' their engagement with shared information, meaning they will react according to their own grievances, add their personal narratives and formatting styles, to this information and quickly share this material to their friends and family (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Bimber, 2014). Moreover, this goal does not preclude the other two goals –information and publicity– because, in order to generate online discussion, first SMOs need to raise awareness about a topic and publicise their political views about it.

The general use of CMC platforms to raise awareness and mobilise people has been vastly examined in the existing literature (Earl & Kimport, 2011; Harlow & Guo, 2014; Theocharis, 2011). NGO studies have accounted for the use of social media for the publicity of NGOs' work (Dai et al., 2017; Lovejoy et al., 2012; Powers, 2014). Similarly, a strand of digitally enabled activism scholarship has explored the role of CMC in citizen deliberation (Dahlgren, 2005; Uldam & Askanius, 2013). More specifically, some studies have found a correlation between consumption of mainstream news and participation in collective action (Boulianne, 2009; Valenzuela, 2013). However, all the above have not really explored how activist' representation on the news media is used as a source for content emitted on social media. Wright (2015) has indirectly examined this topic by tracking down how activists have started e-petitions in response to news stories, and collected signatures by sharing these stories on social media. But most of the existing research has limited to examine activists' provision of news not available in other media to facilitate mobilisation, coordination and opportunities to exchange opinion (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Chadwick & Howard, 2010; Valenzuela, 2013). This research has not addressed the fact that, besides alternative information, edited versions of mainstream news can be used for these goals as well, which is what this section tries to highlight with *selective news feeds*.

It becomes then clear that by using the mainstream news to foster discussion among users, SMOs are then partially replacing alternative user-generated content with mainstream news stories. But far from being just one-way broadcasting of relevant information online, interactivity is in this case exploited by SMOs to include online users in loops of content production. This point certainly adds to the concept of 'political information cycles' proposed by Chadwick (2011; 2017). In summary, there is evidence that a number of SMOs would join ongoing political information cycles to keep their constituents informed about the news agenda –namely, what is going on in their field of concern– and trigger some reactions that range from mobilisation to deliberation in relation to this content.

#### 4.3.2. Intermedia agenda-setting efforts

The second type of hybrid media practice developed by SMOs in this study is *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*, which mainly aim to make SMOs' actions and ideas visible to the public opinion through publicity on the mainstream news media, but without resorting to the use of professional newsmaking strategies such as media service, press releases and press conferences. Instead, *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* consist of a series of tactics on social media to produce viral-like user engagement and give salience to issues that could eventually attract journalistic attention directly or indirectly. In comparison to *selective news feeds*, this practice is more complex as it seems to require a good deal of knowledge about the use of CMC platforms, and a solid understanding of the mainstream media logic (Altheide, 2004; Dai et al., 2017). Despite its greater complexity, this practice is still fairly widespread among the studied SMOS. As seen in Table 4.1 (p. 113), it was adopted by 17 SMOs, which represents nearly half of the sample. The table also indicates that the practice tended to be more common among LGBTI+ SMOs. Only one-third of the sampled environmental SMOs have adopted it in comparison to half of the LGBTI+ SMOs.

The label of *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* was borrowed from the literature once it was identified as a process in a number of interviews. As outlined in Subsection 2.2.3 of this thesis, the process of intermedia agenda-setting consists of the transfer of issue salience from one media to another (Lopez-Escobar et al., 1998; McCombs, 2005). In a hybrid media ecology, these transfers are occurring more frequently from campaigns and discussions held on social media and weblogs to the mainstream news media (Carr, 2012; Chadwick, 2011; Messner & Distaso, 2008; Parmelee, 2013; Ragas & Kiousis, 2010; Sweetser et al., 2008). Chapter 2 argued that intermedia agenda-setting constitutes one of the best examples of the accumulation and convergence of media technologies, routines and contents in today's media ecology. Now, since it has been addressed as a somewhat pervasive process, its re-conceptualisation as an activist media practice is an original contribution of this research to this set of studies. This is why the term also highlights the idea of 'efforts', which helps capture how SMOs have managed to pilot their emissions of online content to precipitate intermedia agenda-setting outcomes. In this sense, Ragas and Kiousis

(2010) have explored how activists' political ads created online have triggered some news coverage, even if unintendedly. A similar correlation has been explored by Wright (2015) in relation to e-petitions garnering media attention.

As outlined earlier, the main source of data to recognise intermedia agenda-setting patterns, and their commanding among SMOs, have been a number of interviews. However, subsequently SMOs' Twitter posts<sup>5</sup> were consulted to triangulate data. The evaluation identified and counted tweets that called for journalistic attention directly, namely, tagging the profiles (@function) of media outlets and journalists. As a result of this assessment, it was found that four SMOs –two environmental and two LGBTI+ SMOs– used this practice during a random month of observation in September 2017. It should be noted, though, that these tweets did not represent more than two per cent of the total Twitter activity of these four organisations, which suggests that it is not really a routine practice but somewhat sporadic. Additionally, the assessment only helped to verify the use of direct calls to journalists and not indirect ways of attracting media attention that have been also highlighted as part of this practice. These indirect ways cannot be measured easily as it is difficult to prove that social media activity has shaped the news coverage.

Related to the above last point, SMOs arrange *intermedia-agenda setting efforts* in two steps, and these steps are taken differently depending on two main versions of this practice. The first step takes place on social media and attempts to increase user engagement about a specific topic. In some cases, but not always, SMOs tag journalists' and/or mainstream news outlets' official Twitter accounts in their posts aiming at publicising a given topic. Tagging media professionals has been interpreted as complementary to actions leading to viral amplification of content. The second step, not followed by all SMOs, is understood here as a 'boomerang' strategy: SMOs share on social media any resulting news story covering the topic they wanted to publicise in the first place. Consequently, *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* blend two conventional practices, although transforming standard newsmaking strategies, and may or

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<sup>5</sup> Facebook is not necessarily public, and its tagging options are more limited, which explains why the assessment only considered Twitter.

may not require the use of CMC platforms in a second step. These variants depend on each SMO's goals when pursuing this practice. As a note, most interviewees referred to amplification of information online as 'viral', a concept that tends to evoke a mass process of somewhat uncontrolled information. I find agreement with Postill (2012) on overcoming a 'distaste' of the idea and employing it as a grounded term to describe content distributed digitally.

A first version of *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* stops before the boomerang strategy. It aims to mobilise constituents and gain political leverage simultaneously. Thus, SMOs intend to make their actions and ideas visible to the public opinion and decision-makers as ultimate recipients, through publicity on the mainstream news media but avoiding resorting to the use of professional newsmaking strategies. Instead, *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* generate viral amplification on social media of topics constructed as 'hot' and expect that mainstream news media professionals will give attention to these explosions of user engagement and 'citizen journalism' initiatives over the internet (Greer & McLaughlin, 2010; Murthy, 2011), via comments, analysis, photos, videos, shares, likes, memes, taps, tags, and so on. This expectation is based on the fact that in today's hybrid media ecology, journalists are routinely checking social media, websites and weblogs and treating them as sources in their search for news (Participant 11a; 7b; see also Ausserhofer & Maireder, 2013; Greer & McLaughlin, 2010; Parmelee, 2013).

Moreover, conventional newsmaking tactics were dismissed by a number of SMOs because they were generally considered more expensive, less effective and old-fashioned (Participant 27a; 2b; 9b). The representative of an LGBTI+ SMO based in Santiago explained that technological change has reshaped the communication approach of older SMOs over time, which has resulted in leaving behind the media logic of 'spectacle' (Waisbord, 2011) that was so required to have an impact on the mainstream news in the 1990s (Participant 9b). This SMO has in fact embraced CMC platforms to have public impact now, being overall less interested in organising press conferences. Thus, in relation to conventional practices, the total or partial replacement of standard newsmaking tactics with user-generated content is the transformative end of this practice.

But, interpreting the above point more critically, the logic of spectacle is not fully dismantled. Conversely, there is continuity of such a logic but under changed conditions. The most vivid example of this point comes from three different SMOs who, in their own words, have become good at commanding intermedia-agenda setting cycles with their use of social media, in its first version at least. They agreed on a key point: To successfully generate ‘trending topics’ and amplify topics in a viral fashion on the internet –namely, enhance user engagement and creativity with the information so it is disseminated quickly and massively–, the topic has to be controversial, ‘hot’ and posted ‘in the right way, at the right moment’ (Participant 11a; 17a; 9b; see also (Parmelee, 2013). The strategy of ‘online shaming’ pursued by some SMOs via Twitter, helps understand better the idea of hot topics.

Online shaming is used in one case to “summon power-holders and manage to deregister homophobic legislation via Twitter” (Participant 9b: President and Director of Culture, Research and Communications of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, May 2017). It works by tweeting systematically about a given topic, every day for a period of time without inconsistencies, so an idea could gain resonance among SMOs’ online followers. It is called shaming because it seeks to make an association of certain public figures, identified as opponents to the LGBTI+ movement, with negative values such as homophobia (Participant 9b). Therefore, in another similar case, activists quoted the opponent’s statements, including a brief comment below and in some cases a hashtag to facilitate amplification (Participant 2b). Often MPs and media professionals are also included in the shaming posts via the ‘@’ function of Twitter, which contributes to the viral amplification as these figures usually are influential tweeters with a large followers list (Participant 17a; 2b). In this regard, the General Coordinator of an LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago said: “If you start generating hashtags on social media that can become trending topics, then it is more likely that journalists will call you” (Participant 2b). Finally, timing seems to be key in online shaming: the person has to be tagged in a peak of salience, or using this respondent’s metaphor, “when the water is boiling”, in order to effectively influence her or his behaviour (Participant 17a: Executive Director of environmental NGO based in Santiago, July 2016).

To recap, with this first version of intermedia agenda-setting efforts, SMOs aim to gain visibility on social media, then in the mainstream news media and ultimately on relevant stakeholders, all simultaneously. Therefore, empowering constituents to take part in the viral amplification of content is not an end in itself but an instrument to eventually reach the public opinion and distribute news about the movement they represent, announce future actions, and recruit people and raise funds in some cases. Being backed-up by a wealth of online support, and the coverage of the mainstream news media, SMOs gain more leverage to become visible, build reputation and establish connections with decision-makers and potential donors. Even when distributing ideas, such as those related to shaming, SMOs are ultimately seeking visibility. In the literature on social movements' and NGOs' communication, this goal is understood as agenda-setting (Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Krøvel, 2012).

A second version of this hybrid media practices includes a boomerang strategy by which SMOs publish and comment the news media coverage of their indented trending topics on the internet. The boomerang strategy connects this practice with *selected news feeds*, so things start becoming a little more complex. It also illustrates better the loop cycle that is often triggered by hybrid media practices in general, as commented in the previous section of this chapter. Arguably, the strategy indicates an engagement with community-building goals as an end in itself—in this the case the participation of users in the formulation of messages during and after the amplification process online. This is because this boomerang allows constituents to see a tangible result from their engagement in the process, and motivates them to provide feedback about it—or evaluate it—, which in turn would enrich the debate (Participant 2b). The calls for inclusiveness in communicative action are more consistent in this version of the practice (Participant 9b). While in the first version constituents' involvement in the process refers basically to sharing information, evaluating or liking it, and replying and/or adding more information to it (i.e. user-generated photos and memes); in the second version, involvement is more substantive.

An LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago worked on this second version of intermedia agenda-setting in a systematic way during the 'Zamudio case', a

brutal hate-based murder that shocked the Chilean public opinion in 2012 (Participant 9b). As background information about this case, on the night of March 3 2012 a group of four men assaulted and tortured for six hours a twenty-four year old gay man called Daniel Zamudio in a public park, who died on March 27, almost a month after being in coma at the hospital (Steidl, 2016: 190). He was found with Swastikas craved into his body with glass, burned with cigarette butts and a broken leg (Funk, 2013; Steidl, 2016: 197). Chilean people reacted by mobilising 2,000 people who asked the government to define the crime as an act of homophobic violence (Corrales, 2017; Funk, 2013). One of the major impacts of this mobilisation was the quick adoption of the so-called 'Zamudio Law' in 2012; this was Chile's first hate-crime law and one of the most exemplary anti-discrimination bills in the region (Corrales, 2017: 64).

Participant 9b explains that, as soon as the case broke out and Zamudio was in the hospital, his SMO started an improvised online campaign guided by two objectives. On the one hand, they wanted to make the case visible across various media outlets and platforms, so that the crime could be start being framed as homophobic. On the other hand, they wanted to empower their constituents to participate in the campaign by publicising it in their own circles, adding more information and reflecting on it. This is due to a very key element: In the first days after the case, the responsible for the crime were still not identified. Thus, the SMO was looking for more information from all possible witnesses in order to reconstitute the scene and identify the culprits. This second aim was directly motivated by a request of Zamudio's family, who approached this SMO for help.

Having these goals in mind, this organisation started its posting activity by raising awareness of the crime, which included the design of memetic-like banners (Chadwick, 2017; Gerbaudo & Treré, 2015) that could attract public attention quickly. The result was an engagement rate of 20 RT on Twitter, and 2,000 likes/150 shares on Facebook. Three hours later, the SMO changed the message by emphasising the mutilation and symbolic violence of the attack, specifically highlighting the Nazi symbol craved with glass on Zamudio's body. This doubled the engagement, reaching more than 300 shares for every

subsequent post. As the days passed, the organisation capitalised also on the support of the family by sharing photos of them at the hospital, or grieving, which added a human side to the story. Considering the little press attention to the case, the virally amplified content generated about it were eventually taken by journalists, so the interviewee highlights the intermedia agenda-setting effect and the role that emotions and indignation played on this. Along with this, the SMO actually tagged journalists in their posts and then facilitated possible interviewees –Zamudio’s family members– to the press.

With some bitterness, the respondent argued that unfortunately the information had to be sensationalist to attract people and journalists. The violence of the case and the pain of the family were necessary to trigger emotional responses. This lends support to the idea of ‘hot’ topics and the only partially dismantled media logic in this newsmaking tactic as discussed earlier.

*“The type of case is very important for viral amplification [on social media]. It works much better to ‘viralise’ a case that generates empathy and unfortunately is violent than one that is not [...] the Zamudio case also had the presence of the entire family, which according to our hypothesis, caused people to think that it could be someone very close. That’s an element we decided to exploit”*

Participant 9b: President and Director of Culture, Research and Communications of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, May 2017.

As a result of these different actions, the respondent says that sharing the range of news coverage to the Zamudio issue on their Twitter and Facebook, highlighting the use of ‘homophobic crime’ by some journalists, was framed as a victory for the LGBTI+ movement. It made people feel partly responsible of that victory, especially among those who made tangible contributions. This is because the citizen involvement was ultimately translated into information actually sent to the police to reconstitute the crime.

*“Many people wrote us [on private messages on social media] to refer different testimonies to the police. In the end, it was a campaign, but without having it planned as such at the beginning, and it served to refine future cases that we were addressing”*

Participant 9b: President and Director of Culture, Research and Communications of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, May 2017.

Finally, the above quote is insightful in relation to a key aspect of creating new hybrid media practices: learning. Since this practice was not piloted as a campaign at first, but it acquired that form in a short period of time, Participant 9b highlights how their subsequent communicative actions used this first experiment as a canon for participatory communicative action. Chapter 5 will examine this learning aspect of developing new media practices in-depth when it discusses innovation, a first type of SMO response to activist media hybridity.

#### **4.3.3. Citizen editorial committees**

The third type of hybrid media practice created by the SMOs in this study in 2016 and 2017 is *citizen editorial committees*. By this practice, SMOs principally aimed to generate spaces of virtual encounter between constituents for them to take control of the coordination of future communicative strategies (i.e. editing a press statement) and therefore produce content collectively, which is often alternative to the mainstream content available on the news media. Conventionally, communicative strategies are decided by staff members of an SMO in an office or assembly space. This layout has arguably changed to an extent by including more members and taking place online. These spaces were set up often in online messaging spaces such as SMS chains, WhatsApp groups, Google Groups, Facebook Messenger, Skype and e-mail lists, to name the most important (Participant 24a; 6b; 12b). Considering its evident complexity, this is arguably a more sophisticated media practice in comparison to the other two previously described. It fundamentally combines aspects of mobile instant messaging (MIM) tools, which due to their privacy configurations cannot be included in the same category as websites or social media (Askanius & Gustafsson, 2010; Treré, 2015). Besides MIM, since people ‘meet up’ in these

chats to coordinate future communicative actions, potentially the practice might extend to newsmaking, the emission of content on social media and weblogs, and the production of alternative or radical media outlets such as podcasts, magazines and newsletters.

Since constituents take part of the control of the communicative process, in a somewhat autonomous way, it is also argued that *citizen editorial committees* are in essence more participatory than other hybrid media practices. The label for *citizen editorial committees* has been created in this research process exactly for the purpose of capturing this essence. The way in which this practice has been described by interviewees led to make a connection with traditional face-to-face *editorial boards* in the newsrooms: meetings between media workers with editorial positions who discuss the news agenda of the day and, more specifically, decide on issues, sources and frames (Atton, 2002; Waisbord, 2011: 149). So, the *editorial boards* have inspired the idea of *editorial committees*. But there is here a twist, which explains the addition of the word *citizen*: These meetings do not take place physically, and do not engage editors only or at all. Instead, it is more similar to how alternative media outlets are created by activists, because these meetings include their readers into the editorial decision-making process about messages to be produced and distributed, and the way in which the exchange of messages will unfold (Atton, 2002; 2003). It also occurs online, and thus people can join these discussions remotely.

Differently from the hybrid media practices previously discussed, *citizen editorial committees* were only based on respondent's narratives and not assessed in social media activity. This is because the practice seemed to be heavily based on MIM platforms, which for privacy reasons could not be accessed for this study. As a result of the analysis of interviews, the thesis has found that seven out of 41 SMOs have adopted this practice, which does not represent more than one fifth of the sample. For this reason, along with its major complexity, this hybrid media practice seems also less common. Additionally, as indicated in Table 4.1 (p. 113), it was principally adopted by LGBTI+ SMOs. Considering the small proportion of SMOs that have engaged with *citizen editorial committees*, it is difficult to talk about alternative versions of the practice in comparison to the

other ones already discussed. Yet, there is room for some caveats, because across these different respondents there were different emphases about the utility of engaging with *citizen editorial committees*.

Overall, SMOs tend to expect a private and fast communication through MIM platforms, often with closer and trusted peers, which contrasts greatly with their appearance on news media outlets or the use of CMC platforms, i.e. websites (Participant 4b). Citizen editorial committees partially disrupt this logic as some SMOs have included a number of non-members in the chats and messaging groups. But, as revealed by most interviewees, this number is limited and therefore still some of the core privacy configurations of MIM are present in the coordination of content and communicative action. Trust seems to be crucial in this practice because instant messaging tools restrict by design the possibility to edit messages once they are received. For example, a post on Facebook that contains a typo could be amended or even deleted, and the user will not be able to retrieve the original message again once this happens. Conversely, a message on WhatsApp can be deleted by the sender, but this will not make the message disappear on the receiver side. Participants of *citizen editorial committees* can make mistakes, or share very personal information, but this will not be an issue if they trust that this will not come out of an inner circle. This helps suggest that the micro-level of this communication is the most adequate for coordination for the adopters of this practice. A bit broader in scope and then 'noise' will not be cleared out from the platform (Participant 4b).

Another important dimension to be highlighted about *citizen editorial committees* is how cheap, convenient and fast seems to be. This is particularly important for a group of SMOs that privileged coordination of action over generation of content in these virtual meetings. As mentioned earlier, citizen editorial committees are set out to establish a future communicative action, which more often is a newsmaking tactic or an emission of content on social media deemed as tactical. This is what makes them eminently a form of intermedia agenda-setting (see previous subsection; also see (Bekkers et al., 2011)). For these decisions to actually be tactical, quickness and flexibility are regarded as valuable, but also groups have to be seemingly small.

*“We internally use WhatsApp. Fortunately, we all have WhatsApp. We’re twelve in a group where we hold meetings and circulate information constantly. WhatsApp is very effective because it is free in the phone and allows fast and flexible communication”*

Participant 3a: President of environmental SMO based in O’Higgins region, July 2016.

For the practical reasons exposed above, the majority of the SMOs that adopted this practice did so to contact their collaborators –namely, those constituents selected to be part of these boards– and get a quick response in a distance. This was crucial, for example, for regional environmental SMOs who had to coordinate internally in rural terrain and across large distances (Participant 3a; 13a; 14a). A similar argument was put forward by the spokesperson of an LGBTI+ SMO based in Santiago and two other regions that used Skype to arrange simultaneous conference calls between branches when it came to make decisions about content to be emitted online.

*“Information management has been very important to know what to answer (to other actors), whom to allocate with certain tasks in the organisation, and manage meetings. When they (members) are there (in Congress), If I don’t send a WhatsApp from Santiago when they (members) are there (in Congress), then I don’t get any input. We are rigorous in that regard”*

Participant 12b: Administration Manager of LGBTI+ SMO based in Santiago, August 2016.

In addition to physical barriers, time limitations can also be sorted out with the use of MIM. Days off can be less of a problem when coordination takes place remotely. This is how an LGBTI+ grassroots based in Santiago used WhatsApp during the weekends, when most activists did not find easy to meet up (Participant 4b). Even if face-to-face meetings were the most preferred decision-making process for this group, sometimes unforeseen events occurred

and demanded a reaction. The respondent mentioned sudden trending topics related to sexual diversity and discrimination on Facebook as examples of unforeseen events that should be addressed online in a timely way.

Despite the coordination functions outlined above, *citizen editorial committees* were also highlighted as key for collective identity and framing alignment (Snow et al., 1986; Treré, 2015). The privacy settings of chatrooms allowed SMOs and their constituents to bond and find an intimate, safe space for exploring affinity and building trust (Participant 24a; 15b). Three respondents explained that communication via email and mobile chatrooms was so intense that communities did not take long to emerge in those spaces (Participant 22a; 11b; 12b). Under this scenario, SMOs often did not monopolise the exchange of ideas but rather moderated them. This process unfolded along the process of coordination of communicative action and not independently of it. An interviewee explains it in terms of friendship:

*“We’re not only a collective actor but also we’ve become a circle of friends, therefore our communication can be much more informal on WhatsApp, where we talk about issues beyond collective action”*

Participant 4b: Spokesperson of LGBTI+ grassroots based in Santiago, May 2017.

Ultimately, one of the most illustrative examples of the combined coordination and bonding aspects of *citizen editorial committees* are the ‘digital guerrillas.’ It is a communication tactic called like this by five respondents representing five different environmental SMOs, which from the outset suggests a level of exposition to other’s ideas and learning across SMOs. These *digital guerrillas* connected diverse SMOs and a selection of individuals who were not formally members of these SMOs on WhatsApp. Paraphrasing an interviewee (Participant 24a), it worked as follows: A limited number of initiators from the SMO send a message to their close contacts on WhatsApp, who are not members of the SMO but support its activist cause. This message contains instructions for a forthcoming communicative action, such as mass emailing to MPs or intense

posting activity to make an issue trendy on social media. Feedback is collected at this stage in case the instructions can be improved, which gives opportunities for people to meet each other and have some level of discussion (Participant 21a; 24a). Below these instructions, the message also requests the recipients to share this information to more people. A single message can be pushed forward by 10 people originally and end up with more than 140 participants. In that way, the circle is expanded enough to have mobilising impact. However, most of the times, it does not expand beyond the boundaries of the environmental movement's support base. Thus, *digital guerrillas* are the perfect example of micro-mobilisation that starts on MIM platforms and then have an end in social media, which reveals its evident intermedia agenda-setting effects.

One of the major contributions of finding this hybrid media practice is to a subfield of studies focused on MIM in the mediated activism literature. MIM as part of today's changing media ecology has started to receive more attention in recent years; before, it was a neglected area of study in comparison to the burgeoning scholarly production about CMC (Cui, 2015). MIM have been found to offer 'multimodal' communication for citizens in varying situations, which includes information exchange and especially sympathetic proximity when the parties are physically distant (Cui, 2015; Licoppe, 2004). This is why a particular communicative dynamic takes place during activist efforts in the backstage of Facebook and Twitter, and in WhatsApp, which is related to internal cohesion, collective identity and cultural expression (Treré, 2015). The fact that *citizen editorial committees* are used by SMOs to facilitate constituent discussion about movement framing and discourse is backed up by Treré's argument. Similarly, considering that *citizen editorial committees* entail also a coordination dimension, there is a connection with findings suggesting that the messaging tools of social media platforms are more useful than their public feeds for strictly mobilising purposes, because of their security settings (Askanius & Gustafsson, 2010). Despite these connections, citizen editorial committees have not been documented as such in the existing literature.

#### 4.3.4. Multi-layered marketing campaigns

The fourth and last type of hybrid media practice built by SMOs in this study is *multi-layered marketing campaigns*, which tend to resemble conventional activist and fundraising campaigns as we know them in the field of NGOs (Bob, 2001) but with a twist: they constantly switch between online and offline modes of communication throughout their development, and rely heavily on their constituents' feedback to be framed, evaluated and reshaped. This feedback is often used to design publications and marketing products such as merchandising, publications, banners and posters. Interaction between users is in turn used to distribute these messages and publicise the campaign itself. It is therefore a highly complex practice, composed by many technologies and both internal and external communication processes. It has been adapted by only three SMOs, a very minor proportion of the sample (see Table 4.1, p. 113). Two of these SMOs represent the LGBTI+ movement (Participant 17a; 6b; 9b). Different from the other three hybrid media practices discussed above, this practice has not been derived from existing research to the same extent. In addition, it has not been segmented into versions as it has been developed only by three organisations and each one of these adoptions has implied quite nuanced and contextualised applications. For this reason, the best way of outlining *multi-layered marketing campaigns* is by illustrating these cases in detail.

In general terms, the practice consists of crafting different branding products associated to the SMO and the broader movement cause they represent, which have been designed by taking into account slogans and/or graphic ideas proposed by constituents when queried on social media about this. After this online consultation, these products are crafted and displayed in some form in the public space, which can range from selling merchandising (i.e. t-shirts and pins) to painting walls of public buildings with graffiti art. This is when an important step takes place: SMOs start motivating their supporters to take selfies or document in any other form their experiences with these different branding products, and after being collated, these stories are shared on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and their official websites. In that way, SMOs can retrieve feedback and continue shaping the same products or new ones.

Participant 6b, the Executive Director of a federated LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago and regions, has indicated that this practice is highly performative, meaning it helps people to have a culturally grounded engagement with SMOs and their communication products. In 2016, this SMO decided to sell t-shirts containing mobilising messages in support of the LGBTI+ community on social media, and then document the experience of their constituents wearing the t-shirt on social media, and asking them to contribute with new messages for new batches of t-shirts during the year. In parallel, the SMO tagged journalists and public opinion leaders while promoting both the products and the user experiences with them, which resulted into receiving news coverage and becoming a hashtag on Twitter for some time. In this regard, this *multi-layered campaign* encompassed elements of all the other hybrid media practices discussed previously. The campaign shared mainstream news information on social media, tagged journalists to receive media coverage and in a less private way, used digitally enabled discussion to decide on future communicative action. Consequently, in a continuum from less to more complexity, it is argued that this hybrid media practice is the most sophisticated of them all.

The SMO learned how to operate at this level by copying and adapting this form of campaigning from US-based SMOs (Participant 6b). It helped them to raise some money, although this was one of the least important goals as they did not raise more than one per cent of their income. What was more important is that it allowed them to generate loyalty among their constituents, use their engagement to spread a message fast across different media platforms and segments of public, and eventually publicise their brand and their actions by relying on committed supporters as mobile ads, because this was materially about t-shirts in the public space (Participant 6b).

*“They ended up seeing us as an innovative, modern institution, and not as an old NGO. [They saw us] as something different from always being marching in the streets during the LGBTI+ parades”*

Participant 6b: Executive Director of federated LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago and regions, August 2016.

Ultimately, the main impact for them had to do with visibility and conquering new segments of the public and not only talking with their already convinced and mobilised supporters.

Participant 9b, the President and Director of Culture, Research and Communications of an LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, discussed this practice in a very similar way. Their campaign reached various publics, used different media technologies in combination with face-to-face communications, and ultimately merged internal and external impacts together for mutual influence processes. This other campaign aimed to display the LGBTI+ pride flag in different public locations such as government buildings, museums, squares, universities and walls, during the day of LGBTI+ awareness in Chile. To do so, the SMO indirectly recruited a large number of its followers on social media to help with the addition of more locations for the flag to be displayed. For these purposes, the SMO generated a digital map of Santiago including all the locations where the flag was going to be displayed and where it was prohibited. The map was released online already including some locations as part of the campaign, which was achieved through direct negotiations with authorities and managers. This helped generate an optimistic environment for this campaign to gain expansion. Once the flags were exhibited in all those public places that accepted being part in the message, the second part of the campaign was launched. The SMO consistently collected constituents' personal experiences with the flag in different locations, asking people to self-document this experience along with a specific hashtag. This helped amplify the experience of the users, and in some way send the result of the community's work on this back to the constituents for reflection and feedback.

Participant 9b also highlighted that the use of this multi-layered marketing campaign has been constantly reshaped due to the user feedback that is collected at the very end, when the experience is shared on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In this regard, there is a continuity of previous elements involved in the campaign but also a constant renovation to increase its visibility but also adjust it to citizen preferences better.

*“We’re always adding a new element to ‘refresh’ our campaigns. When we saw that the flags worked well, we then decided to paint a famous zebra crossing in Paseo Ahumada [Santiago] with the LGBTI+ colours, and we managed to have famous people participating in the painting. This was then replicated in several cities”*

Participant 9b: President and Director of Culture, Research and Communications of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, May 2017.

All in all, multi-layered campaigns have ultimately served the purpose of including better citizen concerns, creativeness and ideas into the communicative process itself as it unfolds. But the action went beyond the viral amplification of posts and hashtags and tended to have a sort of real-life impact, which was the use of products and giant promotional devices in the streets to maximise visibility across a broader range of publics. It also revealed that some SMOs have copied these ideas from other international and admired organisations subsumed to the movement they belong to, which certainly raises interesting questions about learning from the example of others in activist communications.

#### **4.4. A multiple and more participatory communication approach**

Up to this point, the chapter has described with clear-cut illustrations how conventional media practices can be combined and repurposed by activists in new ways in order to develop hybrid media practices. It has then presented four different types of these new hybrid media practices to have a clear understanding of how these combinations and redesigns work in connection with SMOs’ activist goals. Despite various caveats in these uses and goals, the analysis has revealed at least one general reason for SMOs to engage in the development of hybrid media practices: working towards a multiple and more participatory communication approach. Investigating the way in which the sampled SMOs use the four new hybrid media practices presented in the previous section (see Table 4.1 on page 113), it seems evident that SMOs have come across new formulas to reach a diverse array of internal and external publics simultaneously. More specifically, the analysis suggests that most of the researched SMOs attempted

to have multiple interactions with their constituents, bystanders and decision-makers; and they did so for various simultaneous goals: community-building, visibility and political influence. They created ways for all these interactions to unfold at the same time, through one action rather than using separate media practices for each one of these publics as it had to be the case in the recent past.

Today's hybrid media ecology provides SMOs with opportunity structures to create practices that help them with the diversification of publics mentioned above. These opportunities refer to a general accumulation and convergence of older and newer media practices that SMOs blend and repurpose in order to talk to a niche and also reach the masses, or to foster interaction between users and broadcast to large audiences, all of this at once. This eventually pushes them to engage and switch quickly between two simultaneous logics of communication: one-to-many and many-to-many. This is in line to previous findings about activists' digital media strategies in this new media environment (Chadwick, 2013; 2014; Karpf, 2012), but this study has now found that this occurs at the media practice level of post-materialist SMOs in Chile.

Interviewees were asked about their different publics and communication priorities in relation to these publics (see Appendix 3), specifically the importance of each one of them comparatively. The responses were mixed. Most of them have been interested in reaching various publics simultaneously, and it seems that they tried that out simply because they could actually do it today. Only eight environmental and two LGBTI+ SMOs in this sample claimed to work with a specific segment of audience, being this either a niche or broader public. All the rest, which represents three-quarters of the researched SMOs, operated at both niche and broader levels simultaneously and manage a larger number of CMC platforms. Social media and websites matter in this case because, as outlined earlier in this chapter, they were required for the four new hybrid media practices. Table 4.3 (below) summarises and categorises all interviewees' mentions to their target publics. It highlights the overlap of external and internal publics among the SMOs that use new hybrid media practices, which contrasts with the approach of those who have not adopted these practices.

Table 4.3. Total of SMOs targeting each type of public

	External publics		Internal public (constituency)
	Decision-makers	Bystanders	
Adoption of new hybrid media practices (n= 36)	17	21	25
Non-adoption of new hybrid media practices (n= 4)	2	3	3

The example from an LGBTI+ SMO based in Santiago illustrates how an overlap of publics and goals looks in reality: The organisation tried to collaborate with the government in health policy implementation, but at the same time offered mutual aid fellowships for constituents who have been victims of discrimination and violence (Participant 14b). Moreover, this SMO has also piloted a campaign to raise awareness about transgender issues after they professionalised their communication office (Participant 14b). Similarly, two environmental SMOs historically focused on their internal publics, explained in 2016 that they were building their professional capacity to manage their media practices and were ready to pilot campaigns for the general public (Participant 1a; Participant 28a).

Conventional media practices, like the use of CMC platforms, can help SMOs create social movement spaces on the basis of affinities, this thanks to their interactive affordances (Jeppesen et al., 2014: 34-35). Newsmaking practices, on the other hand, are conventionally used to help SMOs to gain publicity and expand their reach (Powers, 2014: 491). These practices are two different scales of communication, aimed at different audience targets. Not too long ago, SMOs had to use these practices separately, in part because at first CMC platforms became fashionable and played down the importance of news publicity for mobilisation (Participant 3b). Ongoing processes of accumulation and convergence of media objects and actions have thus influenced the way in which SMOs reflect on their interactions with other actors. At the same time, from the interviews it seems clear that most of the researched SMOs are not dismissing any media platform or outlet, even if older. The two following quotes illustrate the point:

*“If I have to choose between one and another [type of media, whether mainstream or online], then I choose both. Basically, thanks to the use of social media you can build a community, while through the traditional media you can send a message to the world, for one day”*

Participant 12b: Communications Officer of LGBTI+ SMO based in Santiago, August 2016.

*“I’m interested in politics and I’ve always believed that it’s important [for activists] to use all possible media, formats and languages. No media are more important than other; the TV is not necessarily more relevant than a radio interview in Coyhaique [Southern isolated region]. Now, it’s true that the TV has more public impact, but certainly that’s not the only reason why it could be more important”*

Participant 3b: LGBTI+ media activist based in Santiago, May 2017.

It is argued that diverse and combined media practices are necessary in most of activist communication because they help reach various publics at the same time. A niche audience, in turn, would simply shrink the complexity of SMOs’ media practices. However, the use of new hybrid media practices is not only related to diversification of publics. The studied four hybrid media practices showed that it seems to be much more complex than that. Once publics and media practices are diversified, the second relevant dimension of hybrid media practices is their convergence, meaning that the engagement with one or another public is used to affect other media practices and therefore other communication processes with other publics. Examples as those given earlier are countless. *Intermedia agenda-setting efforts* engage SMOs with their internal publics for the mass amplification of content online that is later used to generate news coverage. *Multi-layered marketing campaigns* constantly feed on constituents’ ideas to shape campaign-related products, and then use these products to have a broader impact on the public opinion. These practices simply work in loops: SMOs move back and forth from media to media, and therefore

from public to public, switching whole logics of communication in real time during the process of communication (Chadwick, 2015).

The above loops, and the use of engagement with internal publics to facilitate a more direct involvement in the crafting of communicative actions targeting other publics, is having an effect on SMOs. This effect is that SMOs are reaching not only a more multiple but also horizontal and participatory communication approach. Supporters seem to be more included in the decision-making of their SMOs in relation to communications. Theories of activist media practices have touched upon their participatory aspects but with little reference to how they come to be inclusive in the first place (Kavada, 2012; Mattoni et al., 2010; Rodríguez, 2016). Evidence from this study supports this work, which helps build the following argument: The development of new activist media practices yields movement constituents to contribute and have a direct say in the production and consumption of activist communication. Many SMOs are aware of this affordance and that is indicative of a shared aspiration among environmental and LGBTI+ activists in Chile to make their communication more participatory and inclusive.

But many other SMOs were not that aware. The analysis has shown an interesting contrast between interview statements and the actual use of social media. In other words, there was a difference between those SMOs whose respondents have been very clear about the use of *selective news feeds*, and a great number of other organisations that have not offered any rationale but, after examining their social media emissions over a month, did empirically engage with this practice. Moreover, two SMOs used *intermedia-agenda setting efforts* but did not mention the strategic use of online forums to bring about the news in their respective interviews. They were included in this category regardless, because in a random observed month they empirically attempted to call journalistic attention through some of their tweets using the '@' function. This suggests that they did not have a clear idea that they did this, and therefore why they did so. Looking at the broader picture, this means that some SMOs did somehow participate in the expansion of new hybrid media practices but only because they copied others. This contrast suggests differing

organisational responses to this hybrid media practice across SMOs, which will be the main topic to be discussed in Chapter 5.

In addition to the above, there are also nuances in how participation-inclined SMOs are, specifically those showing enough clarity about their inclusion of constituents into their communicative actions. *Intermedia-agenda setting efforts* also demonstrated that there is a very direct way of using viral amplification to generate news coverage, and another less direct but more participatory way in which any resulting news coverage is ‘brought back’ to the online realm for a collective debriefing exercise. Consequently, when SMOs are totally aware of why they use hybrid media practices, they still do so for slightly different reasons. *Citizen editorial committees* are arguably horizontal and participatory, meaning that constituents are included in the decision-making of future communicative action. Since decisions on content made in these spaces then feed into other media practices, it seems straightforward to see its hybridity dimension. However, an important caveat is that this inclusiveness is quite limited. Some SMOs talked about groups of no more than 15 people, including some staff members too. Conclusively, it does not seem to be about quantity but quality: these seven SMOs wanted some of their most trusted constituents to get involved deeply in their decision-making process. The idea of involvement and participation is much clearer in *citizen editorial committees*, and yet, only a minority of SMOs have engaged with this practice.

Ultimately, the findings presented throughout this chapter are relevant to reflect on the role of technology, which can be seen as crucial for the participatory dimension of new hybrid media practices. Feedback is part of the two-way communication processes that CMC platforms helped normalise in today’s advocacy and activist communication landscape (Mercea, 2011). Existing studies have highlighted the recalibration of SMOs’ strategies on the basis of constant online feedback from members, which Chadwick (2014) defines as ‘being in the moment.’ Activist media practices as a concept have been defined in terms of their ‘relational’ dimension, which suggests how activists interact in an horizontal way throughout the hybrid process of activism and communication (Constanza-Chock, 2013; Mattoni, 2017; Mattoni & Treré, 2014).

Thus, it appears to be the case that increasingly sophisticated hybrid media practices, which move back and forth between different types and scales of communication, become in turn progressively more participatory in their design. There are of course many nuances in this argument regarding the links between technology and horizontality, and between interactivity and participation. The section has shown that many SMOs may be socially inclined to use and combine their media practices in novel and creative ways, but this is not always the case. How inclined are SMOs to make their communications decision-making more horizontal? What would explain different approaches in this regard? This is the main topic that guides a more in-depth analysis in the next chapter.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has developed a number of key concepts in light of the analysis of the data combined with existing literature. These concepts better explain how SMOs create new media practices and why they feel inclined to do so. The first concept was new ‘hybrid media practices’, which highlights how SMOs can be creative in their use of the media, but also how they navigate the different and converging technologies, contents and routines of production and consumption of information of a rapidly changing media ecology. New media practices are ‘hybrid’ because SMOs take objects and actions of different conventional media practices, already in use, and combine them in novel ways during their communication efforts. For this reason, in new hybrid media practices it is possible to find offline and online communication technologies, traditional and unconventional routines of production, consumption and evaluation of information, and mainstream and alternative media content. Based on the analysis of interview and social media data, the chapter then built four different types of new hybrid media practices: a) *selective news feeds*, b) *intermedia agenda-setting*, c) *citizen editorial committees* and d) *multi-layered marketing campaigns*. Each one of these practices becomes progressively more sophisticated in relation to the number of steps and combinations required to put them into action. Nearly all the studied SMOs, particularly those linked to the LGBTI+ movement, took part in the process of creation of one or more of these different hybrid media practices.

In relation to SMOs' most general reasons to use the media in these hybrid ways, the chapter then highlighted that SMOs have combined and repurposed conventional media practices in order to reach more publics simultaneously, something that arguably they could not do to the extent they can do so today with the use of separate conventional media practices. This stands for the 'multiple communicative approach' enabled by hybrid media practices. Furthermore, the data have suggested at this point of the analysis that SMOs who have created new media practices also sought to include their constituents in some capacity in their communicative actions, meaning that citizens could participate more actively in their activist communication purposes. In this sense, the close examination of four distinct hybrid media practices revealed important caveats in how and why each one of these practices is used in the context of activism. Some of these practices can be more participatory than others. Conclusively, the chapter has therefore unveiled the complexity of the topic as it is difficult to generalise about the reasons behind SMOs' development of hybrid media practices. For this reason, the next chapter aims to examine this complexity in more detail by categorising SMOs according to the specific response they have had to hybrid media practices, which will nuance the construction of theory in relation to the process of creation of new media practices advanced by SMOs in today's complex media ecology.

## Chapter 5. Innovation, emulation and resistance: SMO organisational responses to hybrid media practices

### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to address variation across SMOs in relation to how they have reacted to the process of development of new hybrid media practices. Setting out this point, the chapter thus addresses the first part of the thesis' research question in more depth and starts exploring the second part of this question. To recap, the two-part question is: In what ways and for what reasons have SMOs created new media practices in a rapidly changing media ecology, and why have these practices varied across different SMOs? To this point, the thesis has argued that nearly all environmental and Chilean LGBTI+ SMOs under study engaged in the creation of new hybrid media practices in some way. Chapter 4 explained that they did so by combining and repurposing routines, technologies and content available in their pervasive media ecology. It also stressed what appears to be the most general reason for SMOs to do this: to enhance participatory communication during interaction efforts with various publics simultaneously.

A more detailed level of analysis, however, highlighted crucial caveats. Not all the SMOs adopted these practices in the same way or for identical reasons. Those adopting only *selective news feeds* from time to time engaged with hybrid media practices differently than SMOs who routinely run *multi-layered marketing campaigns* or *citizen editorial committees*. Moreover, Chapter 4 also concluded that a large number of SMOs had a relatively clear rationale for the adoption of hybrid media practices. However, not all SMOs had this rationale, and when they did so, it was not homogeneous. Firstly, some SMOs valued more the multiplicity dimension of hybrid media practices –namely, reaching diverse publics simultaneously– than its participatory elements. Secondly, those SMOs valuing participation tended to engage with it as an end in itself, or in some cases interpret it as a tool for further political goals, i.e. visibility and impact. In short, the importance given to effective or inclusive communication varied

considerably across SMOs that reported the usefulness of adopting hybrid media practices. This variation is not well recognised in ‘media hybridity’ studies, so this chapter conceptualises these variations as distinct organisational responses which are clearly influenced by SMOs’ ideological position, goals and material resources. Based on this, this chapter will account for three main categories that represent specific SMO organisational responses to hybrid media practices: innovation, emulation and non-adoption. I explain this taxonomy in detail in the next chapter (Table 5.1 on page 149). These categories were primarily grounded from SMO representatives’ respondents, while details about their ideology, goals and resources were obtained from documents.

The chapter is structured in three sections. The first section is focused on innovation as one of the three SMO organisational responses to hybrid media practices outlined above. Anchored in neo-institutional theory, innovation has been defined as one end in the spectrum of adoption of new organisational practices, which in the specific case of SMOs is the conscious and early exploration of new repertoires and technologies (Clemens, 1993; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Karpf, 2017; Vromen, 2017). Innovation entails an active exploration of the different technologies, contents and routines available in the media ecology, and an experimental combination of these elements for clear-cut communication aims. Nearly half of the SMOs under study were categorised as ‘innovators’, who take the lead in the development of new hybrid media practices by following two separate pathways. One ‘ideological’ pathway is followed by the majority of innovators, represented by radical NGOs and grassroots groups whose main goal is to enhance the experience of participation of their constituents in their decision-making process about communicative actions. Another ‘instrumental’ pathway is followed by a cluster of reformist NGOs in search of political effectiveness and sustainability. Both types of innovators share a stable financial situation and high level of professionalisation, which are crucial to build their capacity of experimenting with their media practices in the first place.

The second section focuses on emulation as a second SMO response to hybrid media practices. Reiterating ideas discussed in Chapter 2, emulation is

the imitative adoption of familiar practices in order to be appropriate to a given organisational field, which in this research is a specific social movement field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Fligstein & McAdam, 2011; March, 1991). Based on empirical evidence that a large minority (44 per cent) of the researched SMOs have in fact adopted *selected news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*, without their representatives being aware of the purpose of these practices, the section claims that there are ‘emulators’ who took what leading SMOs have done as examples and copied them. Emulators copied even if they did not have evidence that hybrid media practices were effective for a multiple and horizontal communication approach. This reveals that emulators wanted mostly to adapt appropriately to the dominant trends among their movement peers. The section argues that emulators come second in the creation of new hybrid media practices as they indirectly play an expansive role by following the lead of innovators. In line with their legitimisation goals, emulators are for the most part reformist and highly institutionalised. They are also less professionalised and resource-poorer than innovators, investing less in research and development (R&D) than other SMOs, which is the backbone of innovation.

The third section discusses SMOs’ resistance to pervasive changes in their media ecology, which represents a third organisational response to hybrid media practices. Scholars have predominantly tended to focus on successful cases of mediated activism, and thus we know little about the non-adoption of hybrid media practices and what causes it. A total of four environmental SMOs in this study have been categorised as ‘non-adopters’ due to their disengagement with today’s hybrid media ecology. Similarly to innovation, there are two pathways to resistance, one ideological and another instrumental. Most non-adopters are ideological, who are generally resource-poorer and had an interest in building their movement community only, without engaging with bystanders or decision-makers. They were not convinced that hybrid media practices could help them with this goal, for which they have preferred face-to-face communications. Only one well-funded ENGO follows the instrumental pathway, basically because it has found it irrelevant to include its constituents in its communication efforts aiming at policy change, for which private direct lobbying has been the

preferred practice instead. The section concludes that resistance lends support to the argument that not all SMOs are media-savvy and prone to innovate.

## **5.2. Innovation: Leading the development of new media practices**

This first section explains in detail a first SMO organisational response to hybrid media practices, which is innovation. Before going to the point, and in order to set out transparency about the analysis process, it should be pointed out that this category —along with emulation— has been built on the basis of the literature, specifically the neo-institutional approach that has studied how SMOs learn and disseminate their practices (Clemens, 1993; Clemens & Cook, 1999; Fligstein & McAdam, 2011). As a quick recap on what has been explained in Section 2.3, this literature was consulted after and not before having collected data and started the analysis. This is because according to informed grounded theory (IGT), the theory-building process from empirical data takes an iterative form. This meant that the contributions of the neo-institutional analysis of SMOs were adapted to the needs of this study and provided an analytical framework to classify SMOs' behaviour in relation to today's hybrid media ecology.

As highlighted in Chapter 2, organisational innovation is a process that entails mainly an exploration of new repertoires and practices but also the exploitation of those already familiar (Benner & Tushman, 2003; Clemens, 1993; March, 1991). Exploration of new ideas and interactions is quite straightforward; it means that some organisations actively take the risk of investing in R&D in order to find more effective or more efficient ways of accomplishing their goals (March, 1991: 73). Exploitation is the adoption of conventional practices for clear objectives, and their eventual modification and refinement during their use (Cantarello et al., 2012; Jansen et al., 2006; March, 1991). Awareness about goals reveals also the importance of learning across organisations in the process of diffusion of innovations in a given organisational field (March, 1991; Meseguer, 2016). From this debate, innovation is therefore linked to learning in this study, and entails an informed interaction of SMOs with their ecology during phases of consistent experimentation (Clemens, 1993; Karpf, 2017; Vromen, 2017).

The identification of innovators drew on respondents' statements about the creation of new hybrid media practices. The evaluation of interview data found a variety of narratives in relation to this topic. The criteria used to categorise SMOs as innovators was the following: First, the respondents had to demonstrate full awareness that today's media ecology is hybrid, for which their mentions to more than one mode of communication was pivotal (i.e. one-to-many communication through mainstream news media coexisting with interactive communication through CMC platforms). Secondly, they referred to this ecology as helpful instead of overwhelming or irrelevant. Finally, they gave one or more examples of specific routines to blend and repurpose conventional media practices in relation to their communication goals. For categorisation purposes, innovators had to meet these three criteria simultaneously. SMOs that showed this level of awareness were clustered together as a group that wanted and was able to experiment with the media. Table 5.1 (next page) shows the results of this categorisation exercise by comparing the three main SMO responses. It also reveals from the outset that innovation has two different pathways, which will be discussed in detailed later in this section.

To be sure, the following examples illustrate the interview statements that were categorised as innovative. The Executive Director of an LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago claimed that "social movements tend to evolve by learning from their stages and from the things they have to face" (Participant 14b). This was formulated after a general question about adaptation to today's media ecology. The claim revealed that for this SMO learning is linked to evolution, which is shaped for the most part by ecological factors. Another LGBTI+ grassroots group generates its own media practices as part of its core communication objectives, with an emphasis on the combination of face-to-face group experiences and online content, specifically documenting these experiences in photo-reels and publications and then bringing these media products to new physical interactions (Participant 15b). Another respondent has said that 'thought' and 'creativity' are the main drivers of her SMO, and explained how these values have been applied to create 'multidisciplinary citizen studies', opinion pieces, documents and newsmaking tactics with the help of their constituents (Participant 1a).

Table 5.1. Summary of SMOs' organisational responses to hybrid media practices

Definition	Ideology and goals	Resources		
Early-adopters of new hybrid media practices motivated by the participatory decision-making design enabled by these practices. They want to build bottom-up communicative action with the involvement of their constituents as a goal in itself.	Generally radical and having a predominant interest in socio-cultural expression and alternative lifestyles.	Economically stable, highly professionalised but little institutionalised.	Ideological pathway	Innovators
Early-adopters of new hybrid media practices motivated by the constituents' involvement in their communicative actions for political effectiveness. They want to use citizen participation as a mechanism to amplify their visibility in front of potential donors and decision-makers.	Generally divided between reformism and radicalism, and totally oriented towards policy advocacy and legislative change.	Economically stable, highly professionalised and well-institutionalised.	Instrumental pathway	
Late-adopters who copy new hybrid media practices to be appropriate and current within a particular social movement field.	Generally reformist and having a predominant interest in policy advocacy and legislative change.	Economically precarious, little professionalised but highly institutionalised.		Emulators
Non-adopters who actively resist hybrid media practices and opt for face-to-face communication settings as a way to enrich their interaction with constituents.	Generally radical and having a predominant interest in socio-cultural expression and alternative lifestyles.	Economically precarious, little professionalised but highly institutionalised.	Ideological pathway	Non-adopters
Non-adopters who actively resist hybrid media practices because they are not useful for their lobbying priorities as a tactic to produce policy change.	Totally reformist and focused on policy advocacy and legislative change.	Economically stable, little professionalised and highly institutionalised.	Instrumental pathway	

Drawing on both interview material and SMO documentation, a total of 19 SMOs in this study have been categorised as innovators. This represents 46 per cent of the total sample, although the proportions vary in each social movement. A total of ten sampled LGBTI+ SMOs were considered innovative, which

represents two-thirds of them. In contrast, nine sampled environmental SMOs were categorised as innovators, which represents one-quarter of them. The analysis thus suggests that the LGBTI+ movement was more prone to media practice innovation than the environmental movement. The reasons for this difference between movements will be the main topic of Chapter 6.

In order to understand the motivations behind innovators, and the conditions under which they develop new media practices, a comparative analysis of SMOs' ideology, goals and resources was conducted. This analysis compared the three organisational responses of SMOs to hybrid media practices. As reviewed in Chapter 2, the most general tension between SMOs' goals in the literature on social movements refers to socio-cultural expression and policy advocacy (see McAdam et al., 1996; Santos, 2013; Zald, 1996). In other words, some movement actors will prioritise the production of discourse and circulation of alternative ideas and lifestyles, which principally stimulate a cultural change in society (Ferree, 2003; Steidl, 2016). Other groups will propose new policies or challenge existing legislation, which stimulates political change (Cabalín, 2014c; Somma, 2012). These two goals are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Santos, 2013), but generally it is expected that SMOs were predominantly more oriented towards one or another. Furthermore, these two different approaches pursue social change with different intensities depending on whether the ideology behind is moderate or more radical, which also permeates how they engage with the media (Askanius & Gustafsson, 2010; Pickerill, 2003). So this analysis expects that ideology and goals may have an influence on the specific engagement of innovators, emulators and non-adopters with their contemporary media ecology.

Furthermore, authors in the line of neo-institutional theory and diffusion of movement repertoires have stressed resources as the backbone of innovation, because without a stable financial situation it is not possible for organisations to invest in exploratory activities and afford dense interactions with other actors through which they can learn new things (Cantarello et al., 2012; Clemens & Cook, 1999). In relation to SMOs, material resources include money but also institutionalisation and professionalisation. The last two lessons from the

NGOisation of social movements with respect to resources (Lang, 2012; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Paternotte, 2015).

Thus, based on the different elements discussed above, this analysis has systematised three main factors to be considered in relation to the SMOs under study: ideological position, goals and resources. The ideological position has been dichotomised as moderate or radical, and the goals have been divided between socio-cultural expression and policy advocacy. Further to this, resources have been subdivided into three main aspects: financial stability, which gives an indication of SMOs' funding; institutionalisation, which reveals how formally these organisations can access resources; and finally professionalisation of their PR and media service activities, which basically reveals whether SMOs have a specialised communications department staffed with professionals. Information on these parameters was collated from SMOs' reports, brochures and website sections containing statements on their mission, vision, objectives and principles. For the financial situation, not all annual budgets could be retrieved for this study. Grassroots groups scarcely keep a record of their financial statements as are mostly funded in an autonomous way by raising funds among friends with raffles and gigs (D'Alisa et al., 2015). Smaller NGOs did not give access to their funding scheme either. Consequently, financial information was retrieved by asking respondents during the interview sessions to evaluate it as good/stable or precarious.

Figure 5.1 (next page) will show the results of the aforementioned analysis for the case of innovators in the form of a radar chart. As forewarned in Chapter 3, this particular form of quantification of qualitative data is useful for the reader to visualise patterns more clearly. As a matter of fact, two other radar charts will be presented in the following subsections that compare and contrast the patterns of innovators with emulators and then with non-adopters. In this way, the reader will be able to see the shape that each cluster of SMOs takes in relation to ideological and material parameters. The assessment counted the proportion of the total innovators that met six factors related to ideology, goals and resources as outlined in the previous paragraphs. Thus, in relation to ideology, the dichotomic factor was *political moderation*; those SMOs that were

not count as moderate were by default more radical. In relation to goals, the factors were *legislation and policy advocacy* and *socio-cultural expression*. Finally, in relation to resources, three dichotomic factors were considered: *financial stability* (those not having this stability were counted as poorer), *institutionalisation as NGOs* (those not being NGOs were counted as non-institutionalised SMOs) and *professionalisation of PR and media management* (those not having this level of professionalisation were counted as amateurs).

Figure 5.1. Percentage of innovators according to ideology, goals and organisational resources

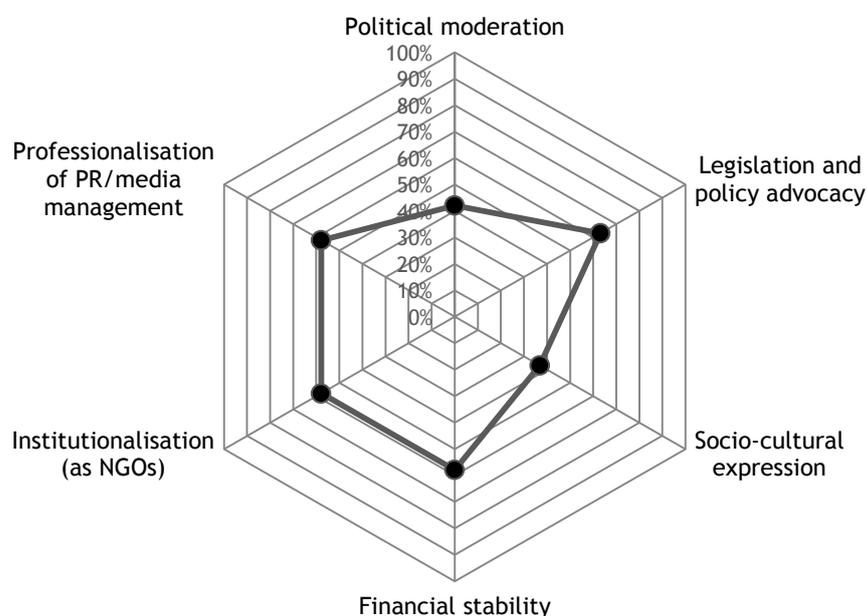


Figure 5.1 (above) shows how two thirds of innovators prioritised legislation and policy advocacy, and in contrast only one-third of them is focused on socio-cultural expression. Innovators can be also considered predominantly radical as almost two-thirds of them were not politically moderate or reformist. What is more surprising is how only half of innovators were well-resourced, institutionalised and professionalised, whereas the other half was none of these things. This analysis helps cement the idea that there are two major subgroups within innovators. One group is composed by resource-richer and moderate NGOs oriented towards policy-making; the other group is composed by resource-poorer and radical grassroots groups focused on socio-cultural expression. Of course,

this division is not mutually exclusive as there is some overlapping, but it helps indicating some of the dominant trends in these SMO organisational responses to socio-technological change. The division will also be of great importance for the forthcoming in-depth analysis of each social movement under study (Chapter 6), as it sheds light on the different factions that coexist within broader movement networks, and thus has an impact on long-held beliefs that post-materialist movements are homogeneous (see Schlosberg, 2019 and Schlosberg & Coles, 2016 for a critique; see also Chapter 1).

In line with this, a more detailed examination of the activist agendas present in each type of response to hybrid media practices highlights similar remarks. These agendas were identified after assessing SMO documentation in search for an indication of SMOs' main priority in relation to social change. Guidelines to identify these different agendas were consulted in the literature on environmental and LGBTI+ movements respectively. As discussed in Chapter 3, concerns around deep ecology and environmental justice are considered more radical than conservationism in the case of the environmental movement (Brulle & Pellow, 2006; Devall, 1980; Naess, 2008; Sills, 1975). Similarly, concerns about gender, identity and cultural expression or performativity tend to be marginal within the LGBTI+ community, which overall has prioritised its legal assimilation to society over time (Butler, 1990; Leachman, 2014). Table 5.2 (below) shows a breakdown of the main agendas found in each cluster of SMOs and according to each social movement, which immediately helps signpost the existence of factions and thus heterogeneity in each movement network in Chile.

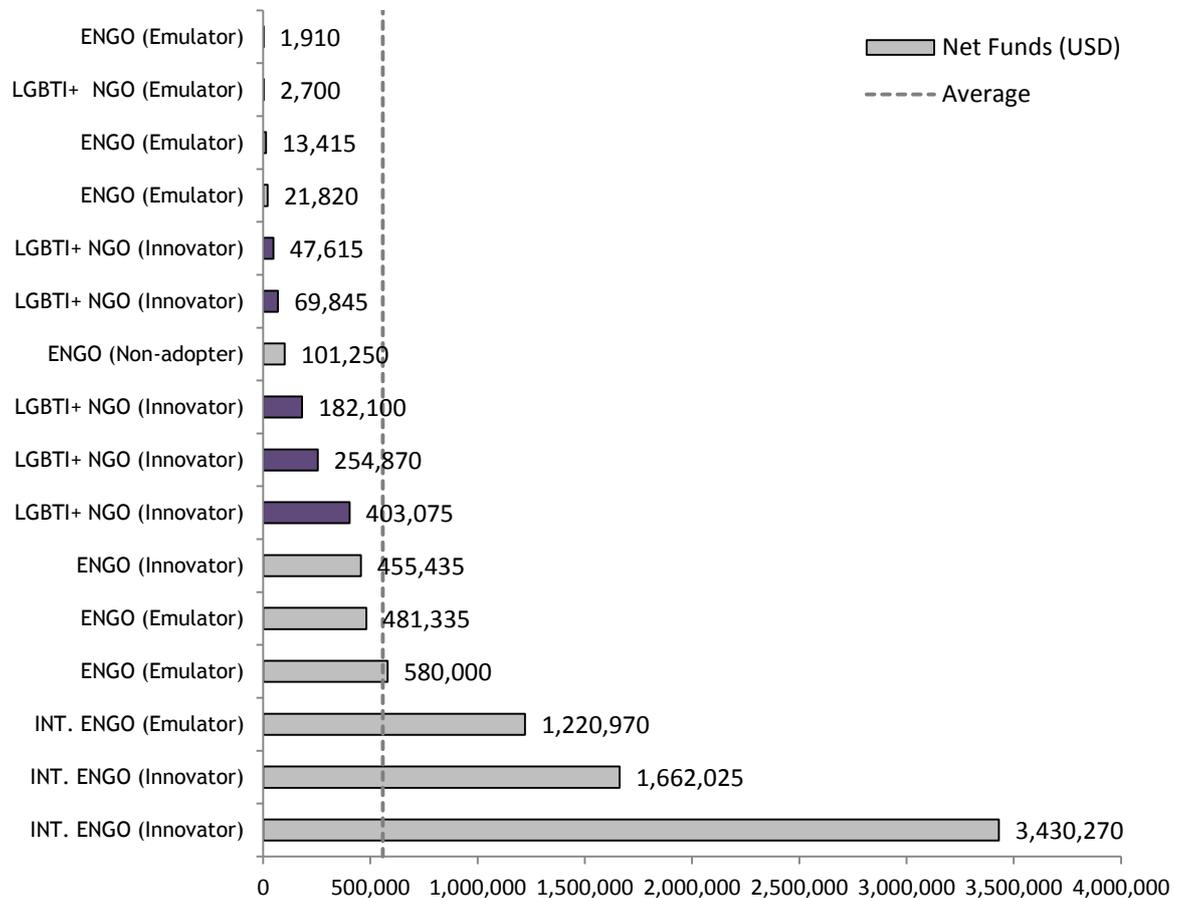
Table 5.2. Breakdown of activist agendas according to social movement and type of SMO response to hybrid media practices

Main activist agenda	Non-adopters	Emulators	Innovators
<b>Environmental SMOs</b>			
Conservation and mitigation	2	6	1
Environmental justice	1	2	7
Deep ecology	1	4	1
<b>LGBTI+ SMOs</b>			
Social and civil rights of LGBTI+ people	–	5	5
Gender identity and performativity	–	1	5

As observed in the above table, more than three-quarters of environmental innovators were inspired by environmental justice. LGBTI+ innovators, on the other hand, were divided into two: one half of them were focused on performativity and the other half on civil rights. To reiterate this key point, the agenda distribution patterns observed in innovators lends some support to the idea that there are two major subgroups in this cluster. Two-thirds of innovators focus on what can be considered a radical agenda, which is consistent with the same number of innovators that have been classified as ideologically non-reformist. Another subgroup, a minority, tends to represent a more moderate political stance, and hence works on conservation and legislation respectively in each social movement under study.

Additionally, in order to gain a closer insight to the financial situation of innovators, the analysis examined the last annual budgets of all those NGOs –as a type of highly institutionalised SMOs– that have made accessible this information for this research. Figure 5.2 (next page) compares these budgets across SMOs according to their organisational response to hybrid media practices and the social movement in which they are embedded. As a note about triangulation of data, the insights obtained from this assessment can be used only as a reference and not for systematic analysis due to the lack of representativity of this selection of NGOs. Figure 5.2 shows how innovative NGOs start appearing in the graph after certain amount of resources, which is close to USD 50,000 per year. Moreover, the two richest NGOs in this selection (way above the average) are in fact innovators, although the third best funded organisation, close to these two innovators, is an emulator. Ultimately, these data do not really suggest a tendency to manage more resources among innovators; they instead confirm the importance of a minimum budget for any innovative attempt among some of the studied SMOs.

Figure 5.2. Annual budget of NGOs that have made their financial report publicly available



After the above triangulations with data retrieved from SMO documentation, it is possible to highlight two important points. First, there is a larger group within innovators that is ideologically radical and focused largely on policy advocacy, which in turn reveals their engagement with a diverse array of external publics in their communication approach. This conclusion is based on the fact that, in the most traditional models of mobilisation, any attempt to change policy and legislation requires an engagement with potential supporters, the public opinion in general and directly or indirectly with decision-makers (Bob, 2005; Chan & Lee, 1984; Oberschall, 1978). Secondly, within innovators there is a clear-cut division between resource-richer and resource-poorer organisations, which tends to challenge the existing literature in relation to the influence of resources on innovative behaviour in organisational fields (Jansen et al., 2006; Tarrow, 1998). Thus, due to the lack of stable and dominant ideological, goal and resource patterns among innovators, there is more than one form of media

practice innovation. Following on this clue, the analysis then tried to confirm this point by assessing the interview material, which helped identify two distinct pathways of innovation, one ideological and another more instrumental. Next, these pathways are discussed in detail.

### 5.2.1. Ideological pathway to innovation: Commitment to citizen participation

After assessing the interviews of innovative SMOs, it was possible to identify an ideological pathway to innovation. This pathway seems to be based on the pervasive conviction among a cluster of innovators that their constituents need to be somehow included in the planning, execution and/or evaluation of communicative action aiming at different publics. This literally means that these innovators believe in a more participatory communication approach, for which they have decided to explore their media ecology for practices that could facilitate and reinforce such participation in various ways. It also means that these organisations in particular have valued horizontal participation of their constituents in communicative actions as an end in itself.

A total of 13 out of 19 innovative SMOs have been classified as followers of the ideological pathway due to their most salient answers about the use of the four hybrid media practices described in Chapter 4. This cluster of innovators includes all of those that have adopted *selective news feeds* in order to produce mobilising frames and discourse collectively with the direct involvement of their constituents in online fora. As a recap, *selective news feeds* can be used for three different goals: raising awareness, publicity of SMOs' work and name, and online discursive production. Only the third goal has been directly related to inclusiveness as an end in itself. The cluster of ideological innovators also included all those innovators who have used *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* for boomerang strategies that bring virally amplified topics back to the online communities for discussion and involvement. *Intermedia agenda-setting efforts* can stop before this boomerang strategy, meaning that SMOs limit their use to multiply their visibility in various media outlets and platforms thanks to user-generated trending topics. When this boomerang strategy occurs, SMOs place greater significance to their constituents' participation in the evaluation of communicative action for reasons that do not seem to be instrumental.

Examining the ideological, goal and resource patterns of these 13 SMOs categorised as ideological innovators, it is possible to confirm their tendency towards political radicalism, socio-cultural expression, good access to monetary resources and well-built professional capacity. However, despite expectations that would bridge resources and professionalisation with institutionalisation (Lang, 2012; Powers, 2015a), these innovators take predominantly the form of grassroots groups and not NGOs. This is in fact better connected with their politically radical agenda. The argument put forward here is that ideological innovators are more ideologically driven than other SMOs, and their socio-cultural agenda would connect them more with their constituency due to the importance of community-building goals in this agenda (Devall, 1980; Santos, 2013). Furthermore, they generally –although not absolutely– have more access to resources and have built the technical capacity to invent new hybrid media practices, which they use primarily in coherence with their community-building and radical agenda of social change.

Following the above point, LGBTI+ SMOs that offer safe physical and virtual spaces for their transgender community to meet, share experiences and defy assimilation stands as a good example of radicalism within this movement (Participant 11b; 15b). The commitment to participation and cohesion among innovators comes from a belief that constituents are those supposed to define the movement's agenda, values and visibility (Participant 14b). The following quote from a staff member of a radical and innovative environmental SMO illustrates this better:

*“As an ethical principle, our organisation doesn't try to represent anyone and that means that a given local community should talk directly with MPs and authorities, in their own way and with all the limitations they have [...] local communities should define what to do and demand their autonomy and sovereignty”*

Participant 24a: Researcher of environmental NGO based in Santiago, June 2016.

Due to the nature of their political concerns, relying extensively on equality and community work (Mohai et al., 2009), these innovators need to find media practices that could help them shape bottom-up activist communication processes. As outlined earlier, the clearest example of this is the specific way in which *selective news feeds* are set up by innovators. SMOs create *selective news feeds* to generate two-way conversations with their constituents, and in that way build collective discourse online. For this they share information retrieved from the mainstream news media on Facebook and Twitter. However, there is a difference between just sharing a link from the original source for users to click and read, which resembles broadcasting for their audience, and writing a customised post about the news article containing some opinion in it. The latter primes readers to process the shared material in particular ways –the ways the organisations want their readers to interpret the information (Snow et al., 1986).

Finally, it should be noted that ideological innovators, especially the LGBTI+ ones, seem to systematically edit this information purposefully in order to trigger an emotive connection with their constituents, being this anger or anxiety, and often include direct calls for people to comment below and share with their contacts (Participant 11a; 11b; 12b).

*“Facebook is where we make bold announcements, we publish our news there. We create a lot of hype when it’s about [politics] [...] but besides this, we also post general news happening in the continent, country or the world that may call the interest of our community. We’ve posted news on transgender issues in Uganda and indigenous people in Colombia. People start commenting and soon debates are created. But at the same time, we use it to announce, on a weekly basis, the activities we organise for our transgender community. For instance, every Monday we have transgender yoga classes”*

Participant 12b: Communications Officer of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, August 2016.

### 5.2.2. Instrument pathway to innovation: In search for political effectiveness

As outlined before in this chapter, the assessment of organisational data on innovators has set out from the beginning the existence of two major trends. One trend was explored in the previous subsection, and connects specific ideological, goal and resource parameters with an ideological pathway to innovation. Another trend to be explored in this section refers to an instrumental pathway to innovation, which is followed by a total of six SMOs. As compared to ideological reasons to innovate, this pathway is represented by a minority of innovators, virtually all of them from the environmental movement. In this pathway, SMOs do not treat the participatory communication designs achievable through hybrid media practices as an end in itself but rather as a means for political goals. More specifically, hybrid media practices allow them to generate citizen involvement that can be used to expand SMO reach, and as leverage in political pressure or direct influence activities.

For the above reason, the instrumental pathway to innovation followed by environmental SMOs is related in this research to political effectiveness. This is in line with what Figure 5.1 (p. 152) has suggested about ideological positions, goals and resources among innovators. As a recap, the figure has shown that there is a division within innovators in relation to financial stability, level of institutionalisation, professionalisation and political moderation. Crossing data, it has been possible to connect these factors better. As a result, we know that SMOs following an instrumental pathway are predominantly well-funded NGOs that have moderated their political discourse and actions to an extent, and have preferred to work on a policy advocacy agenda. Reformism along with institutionalisation and resources are probably the factors that explain this behaviour the best: Some innovative SMOs act on behalf of their constituents, and not with them, for the purpose of achieving policy change. By playing a social representation role, these SMOs believe they can improve the possibilities of validating their political voice in front of other publics. These 'other publics' may vary, but often refer to either potential donors for economic sustainability or decision-makers for broader political changes positive for their constituents.

*“We don’t want to represent the whole [LGBTI+] community because we weren’t elected by anyone, and because there’re many other organisations [in the field] and each member of the community may feel better represented by one or another, or by none of them. However, in the end we hope that there’s some level of representation because that generates loyalty, which helps spread the message and raise funds. [In our organisation], loyalty means becoming a member and donating a monthly fee. Visibility also helps obtain funds because a company can hire us to run a training course [about LGBTI+ issues] or a large foreign philanthropic foundation is more likely to know us and fund some of our projects”*

Participant 6b: Executive Director of federated LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago and regions, August 2016.

It is finally argued that this sense of representation has thus reduced more meaningful levels of commitment to horizontal participation in communicative decision-making. It also amplified the importance of political effectiveness. The following example accounts better for this contention:

*“Today, social media set the news agenda, so we use [all] these media as an instrument [...] of political action. [Mainstream news media coverage] helps us show to our 114,000 followers how we achieve our goals. But this has also helped us have influence on the local authorities”*

Participant 2b: General Coordinator of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, May 2017.

As we can see from the above quote, instrumentally oriented SMOs do want to enhance user participation, and do include their constituents in many of their communicative actions, for which they have developed and refined specific hybrid media practices. In the case of the above SMO, these practices include *selective news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*. However, this

inclusiveness is further used to reach a visibility on key stakeholders that could make policy changes possible.

### **5.3. Emulation: Expanding and accidentally refining new media practices**

This section of the chapter briefly discusses emulation as a second SMO organisational response to hybrid media practices. Similar to innovation, emulation has been built on the basis of neo-institutional theory and some of its applications to social movements. As set out in Chapter 2, emulation has been defined by neo-institutional theorists as an organisational behaviour in which organisations assimilate some or most of the dominant trends in their field without much reflection on this (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; March & Olsen, 1983). Emulators' exploitation of familiar practices is therefore opposed to innovation due to its lack of reflectivity and little connection with goals and consequences (Cantarello et al., 2012; March, 1991). In our understanding of emulation as a response, we think of it as connected to an external pressure for SMOs to copy the media practices of others. This external pressure can be either coercive (i.e. mandates and norms) or symbolic: the peer pressure to be appropriate to a specific context (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The effects of waves of emulation in a field such as activism is isomorphism, which means the increasing expansion and validation of practices until these reach certain level of normative status (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These points have been complemented by SMO scholars who have explored the effects of imitating familiar practices imperfectly: when radical SMOs do that, existing models of behaviour not only get more expanded across a field but also accidentally modified (Clemens, 1993).

The identification of emulative SMOs in this analysis was based on interviewees' claims about the creation of new hybrid media practices. As stated earlier, the analysis of interviews came across an array of narratives in relation to this topic. One of these narratives was particularly weaker than the rest. Innovators were treated as such because they referred to the consequences of adopting hybrid media practices in a clear-cut manner. Similarly, the next section will show that non-adopters engaged in a narrative of resistance to new media practices and posited clear reasons to oppose innovation. Differently from the above, emulators were therefore a cluster of SMOs who did not seem to have

a clear or consistent rationale for why they have adopted some of the four hybrid media practices listed in Chapter 4. In a nutshell, there is a contrast between what some SMOs have done with their social media accounts –*selective news feeds*– and what their representatives have said about this, which has been inconsistent or largely irrelevant for them. This contrast has been used in this research as a piece of evidence to contend that there were a number of emulators among the sampled SMOs.

The above evidence was of particular importance because it motivated this research project to engage with organisational theory in the first place. Setting out a bit of transparency about this, when the topic was researched in the field, the idea of innovation was so straightforward that dominated the interview script. This was also partly related to expectations from the literature that activist organisation would be highly innovative in relation to their use of new media technologies. A broader debate on that was presented in Section 2.2. This has been true for almost half of the studied Chilean SMOs. However, during the analysis it became very clear that some Chilean SMOs did not operate under logics of consequence, which made an evident connection with the theory of organisational emulation that was explored later in the research process. As a consequence of the gathering of these unclear or inconsistent narratives, a total of 18 emulators were found in this sample, which represents almost half of the entire sample. In relation to each movement, emulation represented one-quarter of LGBTI+ SMOs and almost half of environmental SMOs, which sets out an insightful contrast to be explored in detail in the next chapter.

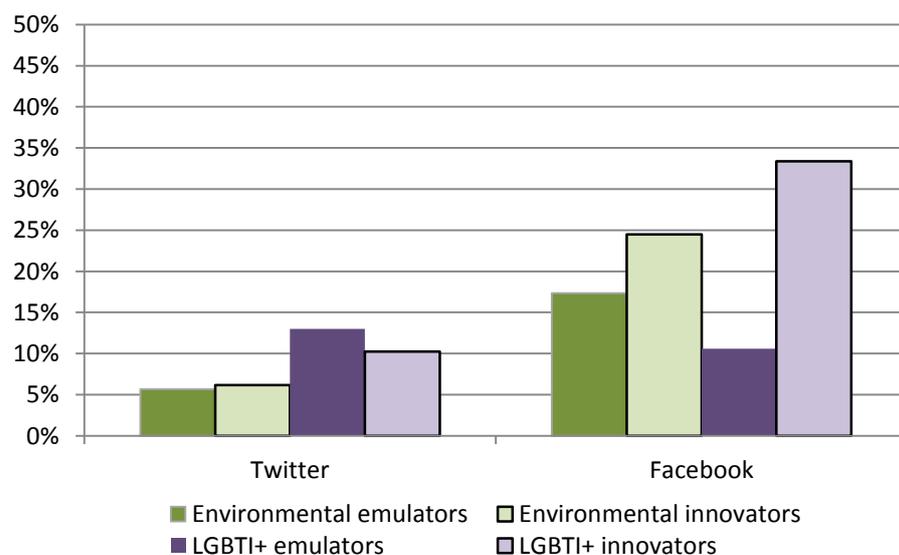
Most of these emulative respondents have been rather unclear. This coincides with DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) idea of 'uncertainty of goals' in the organisational field. This does not necessarily mean that emulators have no clue about their communication goals and media priorities; it rather means that when asked about the generation of new media practices, and their utility, they could not elaborate a rationale for it. But most importantly, as suggested earlier, they did adopt aspects of two hybrid media practices without being strategic about it like innovators are. An interviewee put it as follows:

*“Civil society organisations in Chile like us have no idea how to use their different digital media [...] and however we still use them all”*

Participant 10b: President of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago, May 2017.

Figure 5.3 (below) shows the percentage of posts of emulators and innovators that were linked to external news outlets in a random month of Facebook and Twitter activity. First, the figure helps confirm that emulators cannot be treated as non-adopters because they adopted some elements of *selected news feeds*. Secondly, when contrasted with innovators, it can be noted that emulators were not necessarily too far from the former in relation to this practice. Emulative SMOs’ tweets linked to external news content were only 5 to 10 per cent below innovators, and in fact LGBTI+ emulators used these links more than LGBTI+ innovators during this month. They therefore seemed to be following the lead of innovators quite closely in relation to the simplest of the four types of hybrid media practices.

Figure 5.3. Percentage of innovators’ and emulators’ social media posts linked to external news outlets, 1-30 September 2017



Since there are no clear-cut communicative goals linked to why emulators would follow the example of other SMOs in their movement, consulted organisational theories have been helpful to explain this. The argument is that emulators wanted to meet the standards of their movement to be integrated and be regarded as appropriate (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Emulators copied because for them it seemed that *selected news feeds* were the ‘right thing to do’ in their field. There is therefore a nuanced difference between SMOs driven by internal acceptance, which is their integration into the social movement they represent, and others driven by external validation, which is their political positioning in society more generally. The first form is charged with symbolism since it may well highlight admiration, which first validates innovators’ leadership –and hence their practices–, and secondly works well for emulators in terms of their acceptance in the activist community. Doing the right thing would provide them with some legitimacy, as many SMOs do not want to be excluded, even if they lack clear a direction when using their CMC platforms (Participant 4a; 9b; 15a; 20a). Furthermore, certain SMOs are successful and set an example for others in how to communicate with constituents, the public opinion and decision-makers.

Emulation without clear communication goals or strategies is also confusing for SMOs, despite its good results for them. The following quote illustrates this confusion and comes from the spokesperson of an environmental SMO that in a month of social media activity used 20 per cent of its posts both on Twitter and Facebook to inform its followers of the mainstream news agenda.

*“We’ve become well known within our movement for shaking up key issues [online], and yet we have a weak formal communication structure [...] This has had a massive impact in an informal way because our group is now thought of, in our movement, as being a strong organisation [...] There’s a duality that seems to be a contradiction. How is it that we have a communication weakness yet still managed to bring our issues onto the*

*national agenda and legitimise our presence as an organisation?”*

Participant 20a: Head of Metropolitan Branch of federated environmental grassroots group based in Santiago and regions and Second Spokesperson for the Central Zone of national environmental advocacy network, July 2016.

More generally, a number of emulators have opened social media accounts only to look current and show their existence, although having these profiles did not necessarily mean that were extensively used. As one interviewee puts it, opening a Facebook account may be to ‘go with the flow’ and have an online presence so people can find the SMO and know what it does (Participant 11a). This implies that some SMOs use social media more as a plain website than as a forum to obtain user feedback.

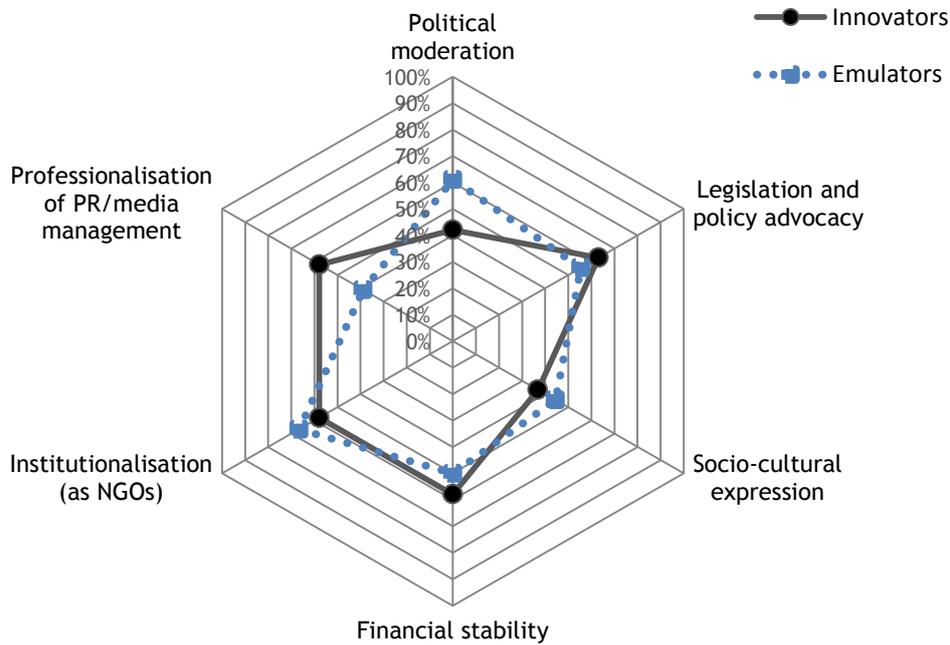
Besides lack of clarity among emulators, there is also inconsistency, which for the purposes of this analysis is treated as a different degree of overall unawareness about the logics of hybrid media practices. In some cases, emulation is based on a perception that new hybrid media practices are more effective than separate media practices, although the connection with goals is less clear. Even if they share this perception, they have no evidence that these new practices are in fact effective. This is highlighted because of the case of two SMOs that had an Innovation Area in their organisational chart and promoted it as a value in their official documents; nonetheless, they did not attempt media practice innovation (Participant 4a; 12a).

*“Today the newspapers rely on what happens in the social media, and the social media amplify what happens in the analogous media. [...] but (it is not in our plans to force this relationship), not yet. We’re not at a stage where we want to make this possible, and it is not in our priorities for now, but perhaps it will be in the future”*

Participant 4a: Executive Director of environmental NGO based in Santiago, June 2016.

In fact, they did not try this yet, which does not mean they will never do so. This last point is insightful in relation to the capacity that emulators actually have to respond more innovatively to the hybrid media ecology. In this regard, a set of ideological convictions, goals and resource parameters will help explain better what motivates emulators to copy others for symbolic reasons of appropriateness, legitimacy and visibility. Figure 5.4 (below) compares emulators with innovators in relation to ideological position, goals and resources. As explained in the previous section, this radar graph has been built by presenting the proportion of SMOs in each category response to hybrid media practices that have a moderate ideological stance, and specific goals and resource parameters. The figure reveals that in general terms emulators are not that different from innovators in terms of structure and goals.

Figure 5.4. Compared percentage of innovators and emulators according to ideology, goals and resource factors



Emulative SMOs are for the most part institutionalised and politically moderate. Despite their institutionalisation as NGOs, they generally lack professionalisation in their management of the media and communications, and are divided into two main agendas and two contrasting financial situations. The key differences between emulators and innovators is that the latter's

communication approach is highly professionalised; also radicalism is more pervasive among innovators and overall there is a greater focus on policy advocacy among them. Inspecting in more detail Table 5.2 (p. 153) and Figure 5.2 (p. 155), the analysis can confirm that emulators' agenda is more disperse, specifically in the case of environmental SMOs. Table 5.2 shows that half of these emulative environmental SMOs are focused on conservation and mitigation, and the other half on environmental justice and deep ecology projects. Emulative LGBTI+ SMOs, on the contrary, seem to be overly focused on civil rights. This point will be picked up on Chapter 6 when these two movements are contrasted for a refined analysis of their reasons to innovate, emulate and shun advanced media practices altogether in the way they do. Furthermore, resources are quite disperse as well because there is no clear pattern suggesting that NGOs concentrate in a high or low range of funds in the graph presented in Figure 5.2.

In sum, emulators have tended to be more politically moderate than innovators, and half of them prioritised policy advocacy, for which arguably the dominant communication model appears to be centred on conventional media practices such as newsmaking and face-to-face meetings. Simply put, emulators did not give priority to the media to the same extent than innovators.

*“Our organisation is passive in the use of new media platforms, it plays another role [different from mobilisation], and so the movement of our Twitter has been super slow. To date I think we’ve got 106 followers; we’ve not made a strategy to strengthen this because it neither matter to us nor has influence on our activity”*

Participant 11a: Head of Communications of environmental NGO based in Santiago and Former Head of Communications of environmental NGO based in Santiago, June 2016.

Still, despite the priorities described above, most of these SMOs wanted to have a greater reach and therefore still use CMC platforms to an extent. Professionalisation then becomes a crucial factor to have into consideration when comparing innovative and emulative behaviour. The exposure to inter-

organisational learning across media and PR professionals may be helping those few professionalised emulators to perceive certain practices as working well. This influence from peers may be shaping the perceptions of SMOs that one day one could start innovating because are aware that this is an interesting opportunity (Participant 4a; 12a). Otherwise, when totally non-professionalised but still using some CMC platforms, it becomes clear that they miss important professional connections to learn and imitated practices imperfectly. The ‘failed’ experience with online advertisement of a non-professionalised NGO illustrates this point:

*“We’ve paid for advertising some issues on Facebook [...] and it seems that it’s not very good... or well, I don’t understand it very well. We invested around \$20 thousand Chilean pesos [...] but then we didn’t have more balance, and only 97 people clicked on our page. I really didn’t understand”*

Participant 11b: President of LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago and regions, May 2017.

In summary, emulation is not as conscious as innovation, and the best illustration would be emulators ‘jumping into’ processes that innovators have already set out for their own communication needs. Emulation entails an imitation of certain media practices for symbolic reasons related to legitimacy (see Table 5.1, p. 149). Most respondents appeared to be confused about hybrid media practices, without opposing them, so if they used *selected news feeds* is because they copied others to gain peer or external validation. However, as we learned from the data presented in this section, a few others understood part of the potential of new hybrid media practices and yet could not apply them to their communicative behaviour (just yet?). A few emulators perceived these practices as legitimate and safe for the achievement of a given set of goals, in most cases without having proper evidence of this. However, becoming a more active inventor of hybrid practices was simply unfeasible. This is either because they had other priorities that demanded a better use of conventional media

practices or face-to-face communications, or simply because of lack of professionalisation and resources.

Overall, the fact that there was certain admiration to other organisations suggests some aspects of social or horizontal learning in advocacy networks (Checkel, 2005; Keck & Sikkink, 1998). This challenges the traditional literature, which has tended to separate innovation and emulation as two different categories, and include learning within innovation only (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). According to Clemens (1993), activists can choose what to imitate, although still just copying, because their perceptions of what is successful may be more evidence-based than we think. This is what Karpf (2017) has found in relation to mimicking behaviour among online activist groups. Emulation is thus a complex process that deserves careful attention; narratives are more diverse than expected. The evidence presented here is not enough to sub-categorise emulators as it has been done with innovations and non-adopters in relation to alternative pathways, but ultimately helps add more caveats to emulative behaviour among Chilean SMOs and their hybrid media practices in 2016-2017.

#### **5.4. Non-adopters: SMOs resisting changes in their media ecology**

Besides innovators and emulators, a third SMO organisational response has been inducted from the interviews, which is the non-adoption of hybrid media practices. The concept of non-adopters has been retrieved from the work of Vromen (2017: 194), who has identified a subgroup of advocacy organisations that by choice, either resisting or actively opposing change, do not adopt cutting-edge media technologies. Adapted to the context of this research topic, non-adoption is the conscious resistance of SMOs to both the pace of changes in their media ecology and the adoption of new hybrid media practices more specifically. Insightfully, in their theory on isomorphism in organisational fields, DiMaggio and Powell (1983: 154) argued that under the pressure of their peers to change, some organisations may respond quickly, whereas others may resist a modification of their behaviour for a long time until eventually adapting to their context. This suggests that organisations may eventually adopt, although Givan et al (2010) have also contended that this may never happen. The causes of this

resistance are not explored by any of these authors, but the idea helps theorise the possibility of non-adoption as an organisational response.

Moreover, some studies on mediated activism have found the importance of ‘silence’ (Saavedra, 2015), or ‘invisibility’ in relation to the media (Lester & Hutchins, 2012), as a source of power among social movements and ENGOs. These processes refer to the lack of interest in media visibility of any kind, or even further, being in the public eye (Jacobs & Glass, 2002). This could be interpreted as shunning the media altogether. So instead these actors prioritised offline, non-mediated or face-to-face communication spaces, either to build their communities (Saavedra, 2015) or to negotiate with authorities and companies behind closed doors (Lester & Hutchins, 2012; Pickerill, 2003). This has been understood as recurring to ‘pedestrian’ communication practices, which are quite different from hybrid media practices in terms of sophistication (Saavedra, 2015: 47). Considering these points about lack of organisational adaptability, and lack of interest in mediated communication, it has been possible to confirm that SMOs may be resisting socio-technological change.

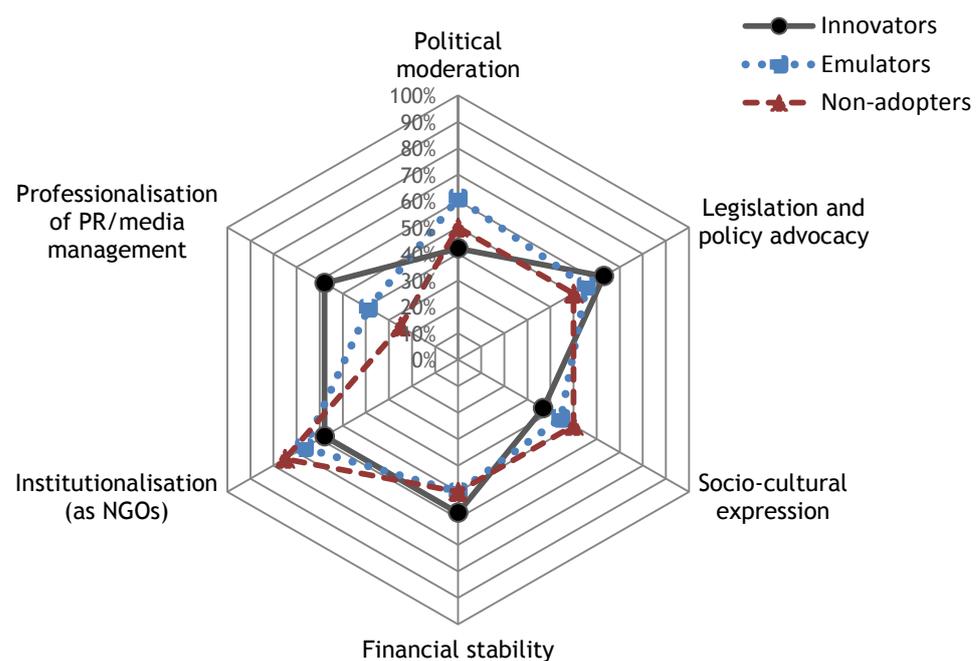
The identification of non-adopters came from interviewees’ claims indicating an opposition or reluctance to adopt any of the four hybrid media practices listed in Chapter 4. To be more specific, the criteria used to categorise them was the following: One or more statements reducing the importance of the media overall in relation to their goals, and criticism towards other SMOs that have helped create new hybrid media practices that now ‘saturate’ the media ecology. As a result of this assessment, a total of four SMOs were categorised as non-adopters, all of them members of the broader environmental movement in Chile (see Table 5.1, p. 149, for compared details). This represents almost one-fifth of the total of environmental SMOs under study. The fact that only environmental SMOs were found to be resisting hybrid media practices posits key implications for this research, which will be carefully examined in Chapter 6.

Once these statements were collated, a triangulation with social media data was carried out. This assessment allowed us to confirm that none of the SMOs having this narrative about hybrid media practices were actually using any of the versions of *selective news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*.

To be sure, this means that they did not post modified content from the mainstream news media to their online fora (if any), and they did not tag media professionals in their posts on social media to attract their attention. Finally, the analysis of social media activity revealed a null use of Facebook and Twitter in general. Three of these organisations did not even have these accounts open, and another did not use its Facebook profile to post content at all. Finally, only one of them manifested some level of interaction with the mainstream news media at the time these interviews were carried out in 2016 and 2017.

Many could be the causes of resistance to the changes in the media ecology. It is very likely that many of these causes are related to the broader movement that these four SMOs represent. For example, they simply resist adaptation because they are a marginalised segment within the environmental network in Chile. This will be explored in Chapter 6. For now, it seems pertinent to examine the ideological position, goals and resources of non-adopters in order to gain more insights about resistance. For these purposes, Figure 5.5 (below) summarises these factors in a radar chart in comparison with adopters of hybrid media practices, both innovators and emulators.

Figure 5.5. Compared percentage of innovators, emulators and non-adopters according to goals and resource factors



As we can see in the above figure, non-adopters are for the most part well-institutionalised SMOs with little level of professionalisation and ambivalent ideological positions and goals. In other words, non-adopters are generally ENGOs with scarce professional capacities in the management of media platforms and outlets, who have good or bad access to resources, different goals and can be more or less radical. As it was the case with innovators, these data suggest from the outset a division between two types of non-adopters, which immediately helps recognise similar patterns in relation to separate pathways to this behaviour. A more detailed examination of the environmental agendas present in the different responses to hybrid media practices has been presented in Table 5.2 (p. 153). This table shows how conservation and mitigation goals take half of the agenda of non-adopters. Another two non-adopters pursue more radical environmental goals in general. Consequently, it is possible to reconfirm that there is a sharp division between two types of non-adopters, those who have a good or stable financial situation and pursue policy-related goals, and others that are more radical, less resourceful and anchored in socio-cultural processes such as social justice struggles and anarchist impulses.

The triangulation with SMO documents has helped confirm that, as suggested by the representatives of these four environmental non-adopters, resistance is a complex behaviour that entails more than one pathway. In relation to this, the analysis of non-adopters SMOs' narratives revealed that one way of resisting media practice changes is built on ideological considerations. Three of the four non-adopters in this study follow this ideological pathway to resistance, which suggests a preference for face-to-face communication as a way to enrich their interaction with constituents (Participant 15a; 16a; 22a). This means that non-adopters take a conscious decision to avoid interacting with today's hybrid media ecology and value more participatory and horizontal communication with their constituents in physical or offline settings. This idea lends support to what academics have found about movement's resistance to the media ecology on the basis of socio-cultural expression, community-building and bonding (Cammaerts et al., 2013; Mattoni et al., 2010; Saavedra, 2015).

The ideological pathway to resistance is not necessarily a rejection to the media more generally, but more precisely to sophisticated assemblages of media practices. Participant 15a has revealed that his regional ENGO has made efforts to have some presence on the mainstream news, especially because they want to raise awareness about a local environmental disaster that was affecting their community. Participant 16a has said that his ENGO has been recently consolidated after years of low activity due to political repression in the late 1980s. This ENGO has considered adopting different media technologies today, for which they need to change their mentality.. However, since they are still at an emerging phase, this discussion has been clearly postponed. Finally, Participant 22a represents a grassroots group composed of young environmental women who have been slowly exploring different CMC platforms to evaluate their adoption of new technologies. They started with Instagram but struggled to move towards more public platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. As we know from previous chapters, the use of one or more CMC platforms is crucial for the proper development of new hybrid media practices, because their structure depends on the combination and repurposing of different conventional media practices. Therefore, without the use of these platforms, it is very unlikely that they could adapt to a changing media ecology.

Most importantly, however, there is a common narrative across these organisations about communities' real involvement in SMO decision-making processes. For this 'authentic' involvement, these SMOs have been simply 'doing fine' without Facebook, Twitter or mobile instant messaging (MIM) platforms. This connects with the fact that these organisations are not really interested in diversifying their publics or maximising their reach. They have opted to work with their niche groups instead, and therefore bystanders and decision-makers are irrelevant. In addition, it does not seem that these SMOs are motivated by appropriateness, meaning they do not want to necessarily fit in their movement. One of these SMOs is focused on a deep ecology agenda (see Table 5.2, p, 153, for a reference), which explains this prioritisation for 'neighbourhood life' and 'cooperative work' for the communication and cohesion of local eco-communities (Participant 16a). Eco-communities represent a form of resistance

due to their alternative lifestyle based on permaculture as opposed to capitalist development (Devall, 1980; Naess, 2008).

A different pathway to resistance, opposed to ideology, is eminently instrumental. Only one resource-rich ENGO followed this pathway. This ENGO's spokesperson has simply stated that most forms of mediated activism are not in his interest due to the lobbying orientation of his organisation (Participant 5a). The use of advanced hybrid media practices would be in this context only noise when it comes to achieve policy results through direct negotiations with decision-makers. Differently from the ideological pathway to resistance, this pathway seems to reject the media altogether. Further to this, it is deemed as an instrumental pathway because this ENGO has not expressed a real interest in interacting with constituents or ensuring inclusiveness and participation. In fact, looking into its organisational parameters, this SMO does not have a membership structure like most ENGOs. It is highly hierarchical, despite having only five staff members, and none of them are specialised in media service or PR.

Instead, the organisation has explicitly opted for specialising in territorial planning services for companies and government institutions, so they could obtain positive environmental evaluations. In this regard, its mission, vision, goals and values statements declared that the organisations worked towards "having the required infrastructure to be efficient" and has accumulated "know-how and adopted recognised technologies in all its operative areas." These were their priorities and not a multiple and participatory communication approach, simply because for them it tended to become an end in itself that had little to do with the policies they wanted to address. Also, for them hybrid media practices would be too complicated to arrange and would divert organisations from their goals. The following statement summarises well these last points:

*"There's a lot of collective hysteria [in the Chilean environmental movement] about communicating with different publics simultaneously, but what is the objective of this? Sometimes the objectives get lost. The goal now is to communicate for the sake of it, because they have to communicate, but ... what do they want to achieve? Be*

*there? But they're still there. That's the illness of digital incontinence. The system has led organisations to do that, but the result is an excess of noise that has eroded the relevant issues [...] There's an excess of media, which become noisy [...] So simply I cannot process ten thousand different communications in a single day"*

Participant 5a: Executive Director of environmental NGO based in Santiago and Member of environmental transnational advocacy network, June 2016.

The above quote is also helpful to understand the creation of hybrid media practices as a negotiated process. The fact that an SMO like the one above declares itself against today's complexity of activist communications implies that it is quite aware of the action of innovative and emulative SMOs. Negotiation takes place whenever SMOs decide how to communicate based on what other SMOs have done in their field. Thus, today's media ecology in Chile seems to have been shaped not only by innovators and emulators but in fact by the interactions between these two and with non-adopters as well.

From the analysis presented in this section, it seems that the main difference between emulators and non-adopters is that the former use at least one or two hybrid media practices –*selective news feeds and intermedia agenda-setting*– simply because other activists do it. Non-adopters, instead, resist them because these are opposed to their goals. It means that, like innovators, non-adopters do have a clear rationale about the media ecology, but this rationale is not in favour but against media practice changes. Since there is only one non-adopter falling into this category, this research reinforces the idea that ideology is stronger in justifying resistance to hybrid media practices than instrumentality. Same conclusion has been reached earlier in relation to innovation, as the majority of innovative SMOs follow an ideological pathway to innovation. Ultimately, the links between innovators and non-adopters in relation to their reasons to do what they do creates a dichotomy. On the one hand, both innovators and non-adopters following an ideological pathway have a strong belief in participatory communication, but differ in how they view the

media in this regard. This means that their real opposition is not related to commitments to their constituency but rather their perception of the usefulness of mediated communication overall. On the other hand, both innovators and non-adopters following an instrumental pathway have in common a disregard of participation as an end in itself, and a high regard to political effectiveness instead, only that non-adopters prefer to negotiate behind closed doors for this.

It is highly insightful that two non-adopters have a good financial situation and have described themselves as highly effective and successful at the political level. Yet, they have decided not to invest in professionalising their communication and PR work. Additionally, only two of them are radical, and the other two reformists. This has suggested an interesting pattern: goals and ideology matter much more than structural conditions in both the innovation and the resistance to innovation of media practices. A more pertinent explanation struggles to confirm in a linear way that resources explain media practice innovation. Professional capacity, in turn, it is actually correlated in most of the cases with the way in which SMOs respond to the creation of new hybrid media practices. However, as this last section has outlined, SMOs may decide to avoid building this capacity not because of lack of resources but because they do not find it relevant to professionalise their communication approach.

## **5.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed in great detail three different SMOs' reactions to the hybrid media ecology that contextualises contemporary activism. These reactions were three: innovation, emulation and non-adoption. Heavily based on informed grounded theory (IGT), the chapter built these categories from interviews with SMO representatives in constant dialogue with existing theory on organisational behaviour. It has also made interesting triangulations with SMO documents and social media posts to provide additional insights about the ideological position, goals and resources that characterise innovators, emulators and non-adopters comparatively. As a result of this, it has been outlined that innovators are situated at the frontline of the creation of new hybrid media practices, namely, prompting and leading the process. Emulators follow their lead by copying and indirectly expanding these media practice innovations. Non-

adopters are at the other end of this spectrum, actively resisting the adoption of hybrid media practices. This categorisation was aimed to demonstrate that, as already established by the empirical findings presented in Chapter 4, not all SMOs combine these different media platforms, routines and contents in the same way, or for the same reasons. This point has not been well recognised in the literature, and therefore makes a clear contribution to our current understanding of SMOs' media practices, how they develop them and why.

The analysis presented in this chapter has also determined that not all innovators and not all non-adopters react in the way they do for the same reasons. In this regard, there are also caveats within each SMO organisational response to hybrid media practices, which have been theorised in this chapter as pathways of innovation or non-adoption. Most innovators follow an ideological pathway, in which a commitment to horizontal and participatory communication processes involving their constituents is of great relevance. A minority of innovators tend to follow another pathway, more instrumental, in which any resulting citizen participation in their communicative actions is used as leverage for political goals. In a similar fashion, non-adopters are also divided between those motivated by ideology and those oriented towards political effectiveness. The former seek to build and strengthen their movement communities but through face-to-face communications and not media platforms or outlets. Consequently, being less media-savvy, these SMOs simply do not prioritise the combination and repurposing of conventional media practices in novel ways. The latter is represented by only one ENGO in this sample that has prioritised lobbying as a political strategy, and for which any form of mediated communication is only noise. Differently, emulators simply copy what others perceived as successful have done with their media practices, which has resulted in them adopting *selective news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*, but without having a clear rationale as to why they did so. Considering this lack of rationale, it is empirically impossible to categorise them along the lines of ideology or instrumentality. Consequently, emulators do not have pathways.

Finally, many variations between the two social movements under study have been noted and signposted throughout this analysis. The comparisons

between organisational parameters has made evident that LGBTI+ SMOs are more innovative and ideologically driven than environmental SMOs, who have tended more towards emulative behaviour and presented cases of resistance. This implies a new layer of comparative analysis, which looks at the broader context in which the studied SMOs are embedded within Chile. More details about the differences between environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs will be presented at the beginning of Chapter 6, and guide a further level of analysis.

## Chapter 6. The social movement matters: Comparing environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs

### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on comparing how and why Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs have created new hybrid media practices in the way they did. It thus concentrates on how key differences across these two movements contribute to explain the various types of hybrid media practices and SMOs' organisational responses to them, as argued in chapters 4 and 5 respectively. This will contextualise better the organisational model presented in the previous chapter by considering the Chilean socio-political landscape. Hitherto, the thesis has outlined that nearly all the researched SMOs have adopted hybrid media practices as these allowed them to interact with various publics simultaneously. Yet, not all SMOs did so in identical ways or for the same reasons, and therefore Chapter 5 explored variations in how SMOs responded to the process of development of new practices. The same chapter examined SMOs' goals and resources to evaluate their influence on these different responses, which were charted as innovation, emulation and resistance. Throughout this analysis, noteworthy empirical differences between environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs were addressed. Figure 6.1 (p. 182) plots these differences in a graph.

The first difference to be mentioned is that innovators represented the vast majority of the LGBTI+ SMOs –two-thirds of them– and only a minority of the environmental SMOs (one-third), which from the beginning has presented the LGBTI+ movement as more prone to innovate. Moreover, most LGBTI+ innovators followed an ideological pathway to innovation, in which commitments to facilitate constituents' involvement in the construction of activist messages was of crucial importance. Differently, most environmental innovators followed an instrumental pathway to innovation, in which citizens' involvement matters more for the distribution than the construction of messages. A second difference was that non-adopters of hybrid media practices were found only among environmental SMOs, which was the only of the two movements to resist in some way the pervasive changes in today's media ecology. Finally, a third difference,

derived from the above, was the dissimilar levels of socio-technological sophistication across these two clusters of SMOs. The two simpler hybrid media practices, *selected news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting*, can be copied easily and thus have been adopted by most environmental emulators. Conversely, the other two more complex practices, *citizen editorial committees* and *multi-layered marketing campaigns*, seem difficult to copy and have been predominantly capitalised by LGBTI+ innovators. All in all, despite their many similarities (see Chapter 3), each of the movements under study exhibits a range of unique cultural and structural patterns. These patterns are outlined in Table 6.1 (p. 183). This chapter will introduce the argument that the distinct cultural and structural characteristics of the Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ movements by 2016 and 2017 influenced their SMOs' engagement with hybrid media practices, and thus could help explain the variations presented earlier.

The first part of this chapter studies the environmental movement. The starting point is that not all the studied Chilean environmental SMOs take part in developing hybrid media practices, and innovation is not a dominant trend among them. Examining why environmental SMOs have responded in this way, the section finds that at the cultural level the movement is divided by ideological polarisation, clashing values and different activist agendas. The movement encompasses two opposite but valid forms of action, strategic reformism and disruptive anti-capitalism, which in turn explains differing levels of commitment to citizen participation and horizontal decision-making. This largely affects their practices as the few environmental innovators tended to be more instrumental than ideologically inspired to empower their constituents, and those who were inspired by these values preferred face-to-face communication. Subsequently, by assessing the movement's structure, the section shows its disconnection due to the geographical dispersion of its activists, and its segregation due to unequal distribution of resources. This structure resulted in a weak networking basis for diffusion across organisations and a unbalanced access to media representation, computer-mediated communication (CMC) and digital literacy. All these divisions have produced a physical and symbolic distance between SMOs, which in turn have tended to reduce their

capacity to diffuse knowledge and learn from others horizontally. This isolated some SMOs, who have deepened their resistance to technological change.

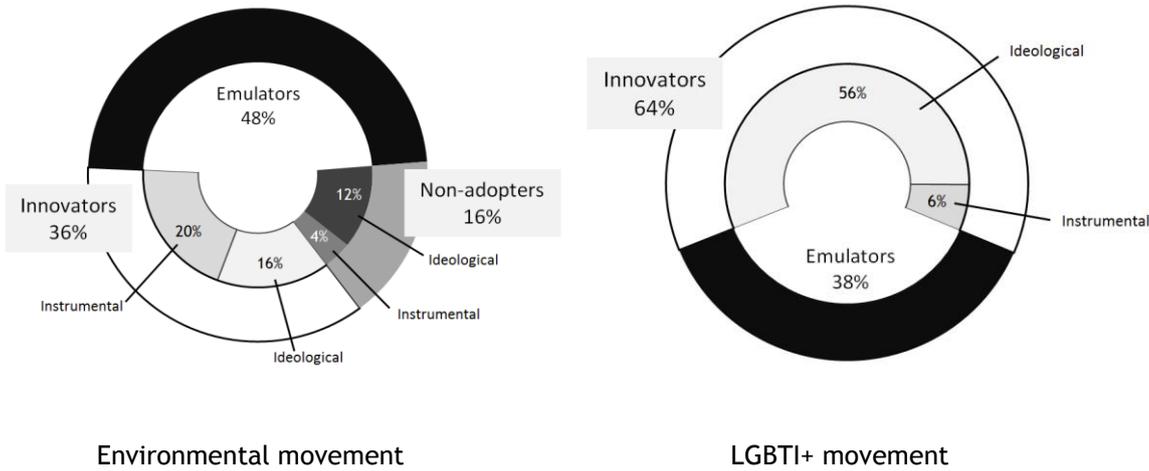
The second section examines the Chilean LGBTI+ movement and compares it with the environmental movement explored before. All the researched LGBTI+ SMOs have taken part in creating new hybrid media practices. The vast majority did so in an innovative way and principally driven by ideological goals. At the cultural level, the section finds that most of the LGBTI+ movement is committed to participation and inclusiveness. The movement defined itself as largely a unified front when it came to policy advocacy, which helped neutralise radicalism. Common values and political moderation as dominant trends among these SMOs tended to create favourable conditions to establish alliances and work together. This differs from the ideological cleavages that have divided the environmental movement. The section then contends that, at the structural level, the LGBTI+ movement was highly centralised, with its core based in the country's Metropolitan area instead of being dispersed in regions. It was relatively balanced in terms of resource distribution, with therefore little tension over power. All in all, both cultural and structural homogeneity seem to facilitate better cross-organisational diffusion of practices in the movement. Through the consolidation of networks and regular encounters, SMOs have also found spaces to learn from the hybrid media practices developed by their peers.

## **6.2. The environmental movement: Various agendas, little in common**

This section addresses the cultural and structural characteristics of Chilean environmental activism in order to understand how being part of this movement has shaped the way in which environmental SMOs have responded to hybrid media practices. As explained at the introduction, the Chilean environmental movement is divided into a large minority of SMOs that copy new hybrid media practices, a quarter that reacted innovatively and a small fraction who actively resisted them. The fraction of environmental SMOs that innovated tended to do so for instrumental reasons as opposed to LGBTI+ innovators who did it predominantly for ideological reasons. More details about these proportions in each of the studied movements are presented in Figure 6.1 (next page). Moreover, just one environmental SMO has adopted *multi-layered marketing*

*campaigns*, and only to some extent. This is the most sophisticated of the four hybrid media practices described in Chapter 4. To reiterate previous points, *multi-layered marketing campaigns* is exclusively an innovative practice, difficult to emulate, which blends a large array of media platforms with face-to-face communications to systematically shape campaign messages according to citizen feedback from social media. So, in contrast, two LGBTI+ SMOs have had deeper and more meaningful experiences with this practice. This is one of the key indications that the environmental movement was less prone to innovate.

Figure 6.1. Distribution of SMO organisational responses to hybrid media practices



As explained at the introduction of this chapter, the specific culture and structure of the environmental movement count as the main factors that contribute to explaining the above way of approaching hybrid media practices. Table 6.1 (next page) presents a breakdown of these factors in comparison with the LGBTI+ movement. This table will be consulted throughout this chapter for a systematic analysis of the social movements. As we can see in the table, these factors are: a common agenda, ideological coherence and set of values, which were part of the cultural dimensions explored in each social movement. Geographical configuration and resource distribution were explored as part of the structural dimensions. These factors in particular were retrieved from the main theories of social movements outlined in Chapter 2.

Table 6.1. Compared cultural and structural dimensions of Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ movements

Factors	Environmental movement	LGBTI+ movement	
Cultural dimension	Common agenda	The movement has three different and loosely connected agendas that oppose community-building, mobilisation and policy advocacy goals, and therefore represent different political cultures.	The movement works on the basis of a single macro-agenda centred on both policy advocacy and community-building projects to a similar degree, which are treated by SMOs as interdependent goals.
	Ideological coherence	The movement generally tends towards anti-capitalist radicalism, but there is an important faction of reformist policy-oriented SMOs. The former criticises the lines of action of the latter, so there is some ideological polarisation.	The movement is eminently reformist and open to cooperate with the government and private firms. Even more radical LGBTI+ groups participate in round tables with authorities, so there is some convergence.
	Set of values	The movement is only partially committed to include its constituents in campaigns and communications.	The movement is largely committed to horizontal decision-making and participatory action.
Structural dimension	Geographical configuration	The movement is territorially dispersed and many groups are federalised, which divides it into a central hub in Santiago and a periphery in regions.	The movement is highly centralised and clustered together in the Metropolitan area, with only a few federations and scarce regional activity.
	Resource distribution	The movement is segregated by inequality, having an elite of well-funded international NGOs and a majority of precarious grassroots communities competing for funds.	The movement is generally equal thanks to the high number of state-sponsored organisations and project-funded initiatives that prevent competition over funds.

The culturalist turn in social movement theory has highlighted the importance of political ideology, moral values and agenda of social action for framing and recruitment, particularly the interconnections between these cultural elements (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Swidler, 1986: 274). Simply put, movements' messages tend to resonate more with potential recruits when framed according to their ideological position, values and agenda of social change (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Stromberg, 1981; Swidler, 1986: 277-279). These points outline the relevance of culture in social movement communication processes in general: culture matters because SMOs construct messages from it, and because it provides tools for constituents to construct themselves as part of

the movement and plan their actions (Atton, 2002; Eschle & Stammers, 2004; Swidler, 1986: 277; Zald, 1996: 262).

The structural factors considered for this part of the analysis were taken from resource-mobilisation approaches and social networks theory. The spatial configuration of movements over the territory, and the implication of these configurations to their networked structure, has been a matter of concern in social movements theory (Diani, 2003; Koopman, 2015). The spatial distribution of movements is thus shaping their networks, and in turn networking has been considered significant for diffusion and learning processes in activism (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Resources have been theorised as crucial in the emergence of SMOs (McCarthy et al., 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1977), which has ultimately implied the relevance of resource inequalities for differing levels of access to the media and new technologies (Carroll & Ratner, 1999; Johnston, 2011; McCarthy et al., 1996).

Briefly recapping on the methods section of Chapter 3, the five factors presented above were collated and analysed by following three main criteria. First, empirical evidence of each movement's ideological positions, values and activist agenda were obtained from respondents' statements when available. These claims were triangulated with induction from each movement's 'cloud of ideas', which was generated by counting the most frequent concepts present in the total SMOs' annual reports and their statements about their mission, vision, values and goals as published on their websites, social media profiles and publications. Part of this assessment has already been developed in Chapter 5 to discuss the importance of ideology and goals in each SMO organisational response to hybrid media practices. Now, in this chapter, these factors are brought back but in relation to each social movement. Secondly, evidence from the spatial configuration of the movements under study was produced by locating all the sampled SMOs, both their headquarters and their branches, on the map of Chile, and comparing both geographical distributions for analysis. Finally, as already explained in Chapter 5, information on SMOs' resources has been retrieved from annual budgets, when available, or otherwise asking respondents to evaluate the financial situation of their organisation. Similarly to ideology, resources were

already discussed in relation to innovators, emulators and non-adopters, but this time they are counted within each movement.

### **6.2.1. Lack of cultural cohesion: ideological polarisation and symbolic distances**

An examination of 25 Chilean environmental SMOs, which included the most prominent ones in the country (see Chapter 3), revealed how difficult is to identify a single cultural pattern that describes the movement. Instead, the movement appears to be highly divided by cultural cleavages, which results in a less unified structure made up of separate factions representing different –and often opposite– activist agendas, ideological positions and values. Despite this, virtually all SMOs have claimed to represent the Chilean environmentalist culture. Since all these different factions forged the Chilean environmental movement together after the return of democracy in 1990, the movement seems to represent all sub-cultures at once.

First, three loosely connected agendas tended to run in parallel within the Chilean environmental movement as opposed to one common agenda. Table 5.1 in Chapter 5 (p. 149) has shown the types of activist agendas present in each social movement under study. As anticipated above, one agenda was centred around the principles of deep ecology, which concentrates on efforts to craft social movement spaces and sustain eco-communities with a radical style of life. This agenda stands for a form of counter-culture in this movement, which is represented by one-quarter of the studied environmental SMOs. Another political culture within this movement was focused on external publics and aimed to produce mass mobilisation or lobbying strategies in order to influence public opinion and policy elites. This culture included an agenda on conservation and mitigation pursued by seven SMOs, and an environmental justice agenda pursued by ten SMOs. The literature on environmental movements views conservation as a moderate environmental cause and deep ecology as a more radical one, with environmental justice in between as a relatively radical agenda for socio-environmental change (Naess, 2008: 96). Three different agendas, clustered into two major but opposed political cultures, make it difficult for the movement to set common ground in many practices, including media-related ones. This point also connects with arguments presented in Chapter 5 about diversification of

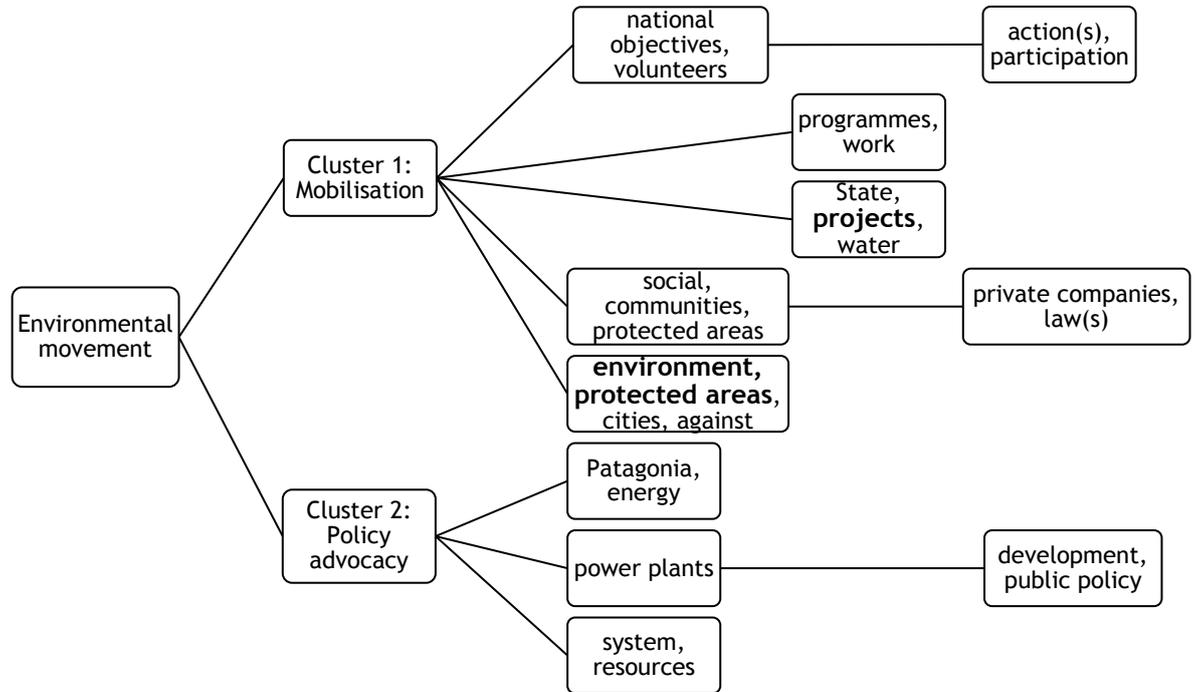
publics. One-quarter of the environmental movement is interested in internal interactions with constituents only, in most cases under the principles of deep ecology. We should remember that a lack of diversification of publics is at the core of resistance to the adoption of hybrid media practices.

Secondly, in relation to ideological convergence, the environmental movement is polarised into two main clusters, one radical and another reformist. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 explained in more detail the tension between these two ideological positions. On the one hand, the movement has a reduced group of SMOs with an evident reformist stance in relation to policy issues at the national level. This group, which could be easily seen as some sort of elite in the movement, was constituted mostly by well-funded and highly institutionalised ENGOs (three quarters of them, in fact) who worked on the basis of a conservationist agenda. On the other hand, there is a broader segment of smaller NGOs and grassroots communities who, due to their socio-political agendas, tended to be more ideologically radical, poorer and less institutionalised. In total, the sample of 25 environmental SMOs under examination is composed by 14 radical and 11 reformist organisations.

Figure 6.2 (next page) shows the results of a cluster mapping exercise of the 25 most salient concepts in the environmental SMOs' documentation under analysis. As detailed at the beginning of this section, Nvivo was used to identify the most frequent concepts in this material. Once identified, then the cluster mapping function of Nvivo was used to automatically group and connect these concepts in relation to their proximity. As seen in the resulting map below, there are at least two general clusters, one indicating a reformist policy advocacy path and the other a mobilisation path. First, as expected from what was signalled in the interviews (see Chapter 5), this duality indicates a division between two forms of action and therefore ideological stances in the movement. Furthermore, concepts of interest for this part of the analysis, including *action*, *participation*, *volunteers* and *communities*, were all indicative of a commitment towards horizontal decision-making across the interviews and were connected with each other within the mobilisation path. The reformist policy advocacy path

is much more technical and does not include any idea suggesting the participation of movement constituency.

Figure 6.2. Cluster map showing connections between the 25 most frequent concepts in environmental SMOs' documentation<sup>6</sup>



Adding to this interpretation, a more focused and directed text search was carried out over the total of sampled SMO documentation to count the frequency of ideas related to environmental reformism and radicalism as suggested by the literature on environmental agendas and its diverse identities (see Section 3.3). Reiterating part of that discussion, researchers have found over time that the environmental movement has been historically diverse in composition and repertoires (Cmiel, 1999; Pickerill, 2003). Like many movements, it has lobbied and engaged in direct action at the same time, being represented by NGOs to the same extent than grassroots activists (Jordan & Maloney, 2007; Pickerill, 2003). As outlined earlier in this subsection, there is a radical faction that fights for the redistribution of wealth and environmental benefits, which counts as a rationale to consider themes around capitalism and extractive industries in

<sup>6</sup> The terms in bold represent concepts mentioned more than 400 times in the assessed data, in order to highlight their importance.

South America as indicative of radicalism. We should also remember here contentions made on Chapter 1 and then Chapter 5 that relativise the definition of Chilean environmentalism as properly post-materialist due to this radicalism. In Chile, the grassroots component of the environmental movement has worked in alliance with Mapuche indigenous communities for the sovereignty of natives over the natural resources of their ancestral territories (Carruthers & Rodríguez, 2009). In line with this, the focused search revealed that strong concepts evocative of radicalism in many environmental SMOs' official statements. Crucially, the most mentioned ideas were 'extractivism', 'environmental depredation', 'capitalist model' and 'free market', highlighted by seven SMOs.

With reference to the divisive effects of having diverging positions within the same movement, a number of respondents have referred to one or another faction in a critical way. Radical SMOs tended to think that reformists have 'sold out' the environmental movement to capitalist interests, and have attempted to co-opt grassroots communities for their own benefits (Participant 21a; 24a). Reformist SMOs viewed radicalism as a stepping stone for the environmental protection and sustainable development of the country, and have even referred to them as 'a club of whiners' (Participant 5a; 7a). Paradoxically, radical factions are viewed as marginal by these 'elite' SMOs, even if in reality they represent more than half of the sample. This paradox is demonstrative of the ideological gap that keeps environmental SMOs dispersed. As mentioned earlier, this gap hints at the challenge that environmental movements in the Global South pose to the definition of environmentalism as a post-materialist movement (Schlosberg, 2019; Schlosberg & Coles, 2016). The only non-adopter SMO following the instrumental path, namely, focused on lobbying, viewed radicalism as a dysfunctional component of the national environmental movement, which goes in opposite directions to the 'right' way of dealing with social change dilemmas and, furthermore, it is the only side to be blamed for its segregation.

*"We've proposed an alternative energy matrix for the country. We've actually moved from protesting to designing a policy proposal [...] And this is in fact the logic behind the marginality of most of the environmental*

*movement. They don't want to go to the core of the debate like us, rely on arguments and propose a plan B"*

Participant 5a, Executive Director of environmental NGO based in Santiago and Member of environmental transnational advocacy network, June 2016.

Finally, regarding its set of values, the environmental movement seems to be also divided. Table 6.2 (below) shows the ten most important values and principles highlighted in environmental SMO documentation. Similarly to the tasks to determine activist agendas and ideological positions, an NVivo word frequency query was run over this material to find the most frequent concepts that were identified as ethics principles.

Table 6.2. Ten most mentioned values in environmental SMOs' documentation

Value	(n)
Development	78
Opposition	67
Agreement	48
Action	44
Participation	40
Work	40
Protection	39
Voluntarism	39
Conservation	38
Accomplishment	32

The table above reveals that the movement is predominantly inspired by contradictory principles such as 'opposition' and 'agreement'. Moreover, the principles of 'participation' and 'voluntarism' are less or equally frequent than principles evocative of strategic action such as 'development', 'action' and 'work'. This is interpreted as lending support to previous clear-cut divisions between a radical eco-socialist agenda and a reformist conservationist agenda within the movement. All in all, connected with findings about the instrumental pathway to innovation in the environmental movement, only a few SMOs had a commitment to include their constituents in their communicative actions.

Nonetheless, the largest fraction of the movement either does not pay attention to their constituency, or if they do, it is in order to be collectively legitimated and use this for political leverage in policy discussions.

In sum, the analysis of the environmental movement's characteristics has shown how some anti-capitalist factions are focused on deep ecology projects, whereas other factions stand for a reformist stance and chase instances of collaboration with decision-makers. These coexisting identities oppose horizontal participation to private lobbying, and cultural expression to policy-making (see Table 6.1, p. 183, for a fuller snapshot). Considering this point, it is not possible to view this movement as fully committed to inclusive decision-making in relation to communicative action. In turn, this makes it thus difficult to find most of the movement engaged in the development of hybrid media practices. Comparatively, the interest in this form of engagement is crucial to become a media practice innovator in the LGBTI+ movement. In the environmental movement there are more instrumental than ideologically inspired SMOs, and in fact, those who were inspired by participatory values have chosen face-to-face communication over the use of the media.

To be clear, having internal disagreements about how to influence environmental policy, the movement has not established its own way of using the media for these purposes. Discourses on what is effective communication in this regard varied from SMO to SMO (Participant 5a). Reformist SMOs continued using conventional newsmaking strategies because they valued their appearances in the mainstream press for legitimacy, fundraising and policy influence reasons (Participant 11a; 12a). Arguably, without a canon, it seemed appropriate for these SMOs to keep using conventional media practices, at least for news media publicity. Conversely, some radical SMOs explored more their media ecology and attempted to make innovations to influence journalists (see Section 4.3). This becomes even clearer when accounting for the two pathways of non-adoption: Radical non-adopters did not want to sacrifice their ideals and 'disruptive' style in order to adapt to the market imperatives of the journalistic logic (Participant 19a; 20a; see also Waisbord, 2011: 157). Reformist non-adopters capitalised on their lobbying capacities and disregarded the media altogether.

Another point in relation to political incoherence has to do with the weak capacity of the movement to build networks. Lessons from the Mapuche movement in Chile indicate that enduring ideological divisions, with some activists less prone to be in contact with civil society, prevented the formation of sustainable networks (Carruthers & Rodríguez, 2009: 754). Without networks as a supporting platform, the horizontal diffusion of new practices becomes weak and unstable (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Paternotte & Kollman, 2014). This is, first of all, likely to explain why nearly one-fifth of the environmental SMOs resisted the creation of new media practices. An important number of organisations stayed relatively disconnected from their community, or marginalised from the mainstream sub-group that made the movement visible. In consequence, only a minority of SMOs were connected with each other, exposed themselves to new practices, and therefore managed to understand how the media contributed to the inclusion of movement constituents into the activist communication process.

Lending support to this point, some factions of the movement have felt inclined to interact with other environmental organisations in a horizontal way, for which they prioritised CMC platforms in their adoption of hybrid media practices. Radical innovators have met this criterion, thus challenging the vision that most reformist and non-adopter SMOs had of environmental radicalism.

*“We understood years ago already that we had to create a network with other organisations and communities at the local level. Consequently, we make our social media available [not only for us but] also to all those communities [...] for example, by sharing their information”*

Participant 23a, President of environmental NGO based in Santiago, July 2016.

The above quote also implies that the inclination for network-building does not emerge spontaneously. Many SMOs learned this is something they had to do after exploring their surroundings and interacting with other organisations.

*“We’ve used YouTube a lot. All the content we receive from people lending us support on their Twitter and Facebook accounts is uploaded to our YouTube channel [...] In some cases, we’ve been involved directly [in the content production]; in some others, people created the content and gave it away for us. There’s some sort of feedback”*

Participant 23a, President of environmental NGO based in Santiago, July 2016.

In this regard, some SMOs seemed to identify a communication need in their constituency and reacted accordingly, for which innovation offered a formula. With reference to *citizen editorial committees*, used to engage with constituents more directly in the production of activist messages (see Chapter 4), the same interviewee reveals above the extent of interaction with the broader environmental movement, at least for when ideological resonance was available. Conclusively, there was a segment of the environmental movement that innovated, and this is explained by the few instances of cooperation that have taken place in the last decade.

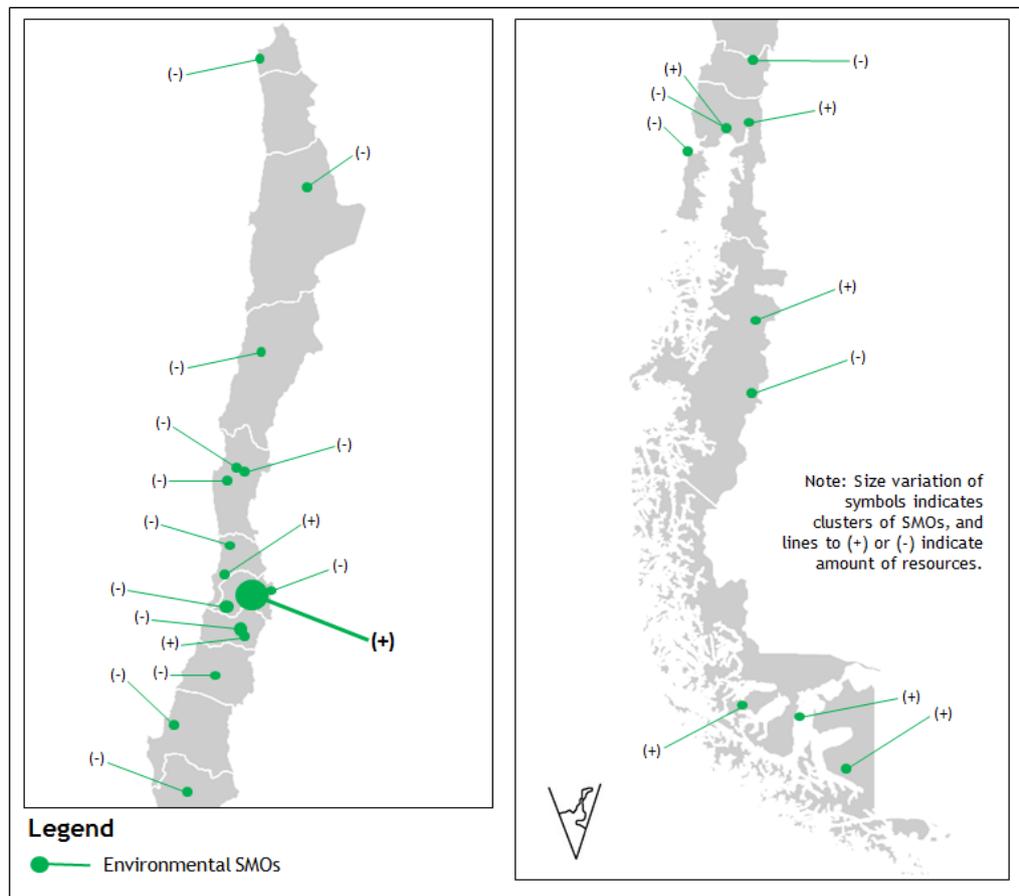
#### **6.2.2. The impact of territorial dispersion and inequality on network capacity**

The Chilean environmental movement is not only culturally but also structurally segmented. The movement is characterised by its lack of centralisation, a degree of segregation and unbalanced access to resources (see Table 6.1, p. 183). First, it is very dispersed across the country. As outlined in the available literature on Chilean environmental conflicts, the main reason for this geographical configuration is that most of the movement struggles against natural resource depletion and landscape transformation in isolated and often ‘pristine’ corners of the country (Delamaza et al., 2017; Rodríguez et al., 2015).

After mapping the physical presence of all the sampled SMOs throughout Chile, this research has found that half of the environmental SMOs had a federated structure, which multiplied their operations in regions. In contrast, the other half of the movement was based in the Metropolitan Area only, without regional operations. Figure 6.3 (next page) suggests this structure by

indicating where SMOs and their branches are located in Chile. Considering this structure, it is argued that the movement is divided into a central hub in Santiago and periphery in regions. Due to the particular geographical conditions of the country, regional operations remained isolated from the rest and detached from what they considered as the hegemonic centre of the movement (Participant 3a; 23a).

Figure 6.3. Geographical dispersion of environmental SMOs in Chile



Source: Map design was retrieved from [Chile with Regions - Single Color](#) by [FreeVectorMaps.com](#) in 2018, and complemented with thesis' research data.

The national dispersion is replicated within the Metropolitan region of the country as well. Figure 6.4 (next page) shows the spatial distribution of the sampled environmental SMOs who had headquarters in Santiago. The area enclosed by a grey border indicates the zone corresponding to Gran Santiago, which is the civic and economic centre of the Metropolitan region of Chile. Most

of the environmental SMOs operate within Gran Santiago, but there were three organisations based at the margins of this zone and one that was totally out of it.

Figure 6.4. Distribution of environmental SMOs in the Metropolitan region of Chile



Source: Map design retrieved from CELADE-ECLAC on 23-08-2018 ([www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/poblacion-y-desarrollo](http://www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/poblacion-y-desarrollo)), complemented with thesis' research data.

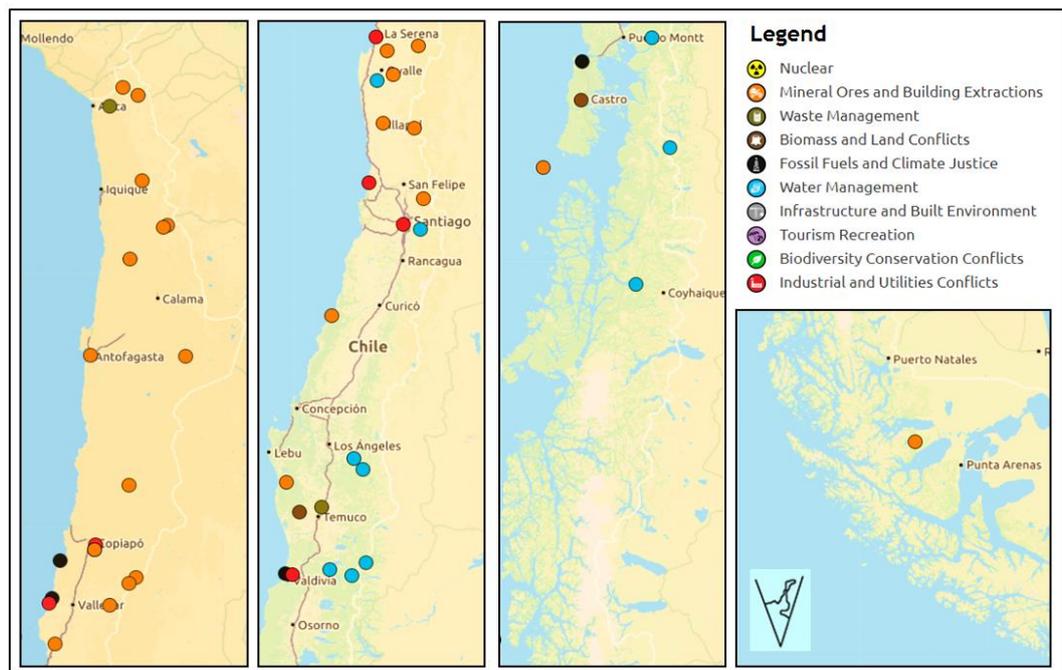
Secondly, along with the specific geography of the environmental movement, it has been possible to identify an unequal distribution of resources between its centre and its periphery of the environmental movement. Figure 6.3 (previous page) showed with a plus or a minus symbol the declared resource situation of each SMO<sup>7</sup>. When it has been a cluster of SMOs, like in the Metropolitan area, the average financial situation has been highlighted. The map revealed how the movement tended to accumulate more resources in the capital of Chile and to some extent in the Southern territories, where in fact most of the energy-centred campaigns have happened since 2011 (Scherman et al., 2015: 151-152). In contrast, the North and South-Central zones of Chile have fewer

<sup>7</sup> As a recap, budgetary information was collected for 10 ENGOs and 6 LGBTI+ NGOs. For the rest of the SMOs, questions about their financial situation were formulated in the interviews.

resources. Interestingly, these regions accumulate as many environmental conflicts as the central area of the country.

Until 2014, almost half of the total environmental conflicts in Chile were located between Arica and Coquimbo, which corresponds to the North of the country (Delamaza et al., 2017: 32-33). Figure 6.5 (below) helps highlight this point by showing the distribution of Chilean environmental conflicts in 2018. The map, developed by the Environmental Justice Atlas (Temper et al., 2015), confirms the high concentration of conflicts in the North to date.

Figure 6.5. Active environmental conflicts in Chile in 2018 according to type of conflict



Source: Environmental Justice Atlas [data set], retrieved from [www.ejatlas.org/country/chile](http://www.ejatlas.org/country/chile) [26/08/2018]. About permission to use this map: <https://www.ejatlas.org/disclaimer>.

Paradoxically, Northern Chile is eminently a mining zone; it concentrates 65% of all copper extraction in the country (Sonami, 2018). Copper is one of the most important economic sub-sectors in Chile: refined and ore copper represented 50 per cent of the total exports of Chile in 2017 and 33 per cent of the total foreign investment between 1974 and 2015 (Cochilco, 2019). Moreover,

two respondents stressed the importance of mining for the emergence of social conflict in the Atacama Desert (Participant 21a; 24a).

The mismatch between the number of environmental conflicts and the amount of movement resources in the North of Chile shows an evident lack of priority to this part of the country. Arguably, on the basis of resource-mobilisation theory (McAdam et al., 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1977), this may be explained by the mass mobilisation agenda followed by more than half of the sampled environmental SMOs, which has been pinpointed in Subsection 6.2.1. Other regions are prioritised by SMOs because they are more densely populated. Consequently, the South receives more movement resources because SMOs could potentially mobilise around 2,831,000 people there (INE, 2017). The Northern regions, in contrast, have a population of approximately 843,000 people, and this does not represent more than 12% of the total population living in Santiago only (INE, 2017). The unequal distribution of resources in this movement is therefore not only connected with the geographical configuration of the country but also linked back to the divided agenda of the movement. To gain deeper insights into the resource distribution that characterises this movement, we can zoom into the finances of a few ENGOs in specific. Table 6.3 (below) shows financial parameters about all those environmental SMOS who made accessible their budgetary information (ten in total).

Table 6.3. Range of funds of ten ENGOs<sup>8</sup>

Range of funds (USD)	Environmental SMOs (10)
Poorer (less than 50,000)	30%
50,000 - 250,000	10%
250,000 - 500,000	20%
500,000 - 750,000	10%
750,000 - 1,000,000	0%
1,000,000 - 2,000,000	10%
More than 2,000,000	10%



<sup>8</sup> Funds have been retrieved from the most recent annual budget available (net spending).

The table above shows how unequally distributed resources were among ENGOs: A poorer basis managed less than USD 50,000 per year, which represents 30 per cent of the selection of ENGOs; in contrast, a richer elite subgroup managed more than USD 1,000,000 per year, which represents 20 per cent of the selection. This means that the elite subgroup worked with budgets 20 times larger than many ENGOs. Furthermore, the other 50 per cent of these organisations are concentrated in a range of funds from USD 50,000 to USD 750,000. Resources thus vary greatly in just a fraction of ENGOs that is 40 per cent of the sampled environmental SMOs. The linear graph presented at the bottom of Table 6.3 (previous page) illustrates more clearly this disproportionate distribution of resources. Ultimately, the above assessment helps reinforce the argument that a minority dominates the centre of the movement and has enough resources to manage local environmental conflicts directly. By adding to these data the self-reported financial situation of other ENGOs and grassroots groups, it is possible to see that half of environmental SMOs enjoy a good financial situation, counting four local offices of transnational NGOs in their ranks (see Chapter 5 for details on SMO funding). This contrasts with the other half of national and poorer environmental SMOs as well as the precarious reality of autonomous grassroots in regions. Some respondents have argued that resource inequalities have caused certain level of competition between SMOs for funding, specifically potential donors and state-sponsored projects and bids (Participant 1a; 12a; 10a). In fact, sponsored SMOs that access restricted yet stable funds are a minority within this sample, whereas most environmental SMOs survive thanks to fundraising campaigns and contracts, increasing this competitiveness.

The above analysis allows reinforcing the cultural segregation introduced in the previous subsection. All the listed cleavages –ideological, geographical and resource– tend to connect with one another. First, the networking capacity of the environmental movement is limited. This is not only because the movement is polarised and divided into factions with their own agenda, but also due to the geographical dispersion of environmental SMOs and the accumulation of resources only in certain parts of the country. This point is key as the literature on organisations has highlighted the importance of the geographical proximity in processes of learning and diffusion (Meseguer, 2016). Data retrieved during two

fieldwork periods in Chile confirms that a few networks have managed to coalesce in the past, but these were heavily issue-oriented and today remain disconnected after some victories and losses in the policy arena. This supports literature showing that Chilean environmental SMOs have made tangible efforts to create networks with indigenous communities and human rights activists, and have had an impact at the local level but low impact nationwide (Carruthers & Rodríguez, 2009: 757). The Executive Director of an ENGO based in Santiago explained that most of the movement is disconnected, not only at the movement level but also in relation to authorities, corporations and other movements (Participant 5a).

It is however expected that thicker webs of associational life produce opportunities for learning (Carruthers & Rodríguez, 2009: 743). Arguably, when these resources are absent or scarce, the diffusion of new media practices does not flow as well. Many environmental SMOs are located in regions, isolated from the rest, experiencing their belonging to the movement differently from their peers, which in turn determines their lack of exploration of the media ecology. Some other groups oppose what leading or 'elite' organisations do with the media in order to remain radical and avoid being appropriate to their field.

Resource inequality has also been of significance for the dominant responses to the hybrid media ecology among environmental SMOs. A hegemonic centralised hub in the capital is well-funded and politically moderate. This hub has tended to be more emulative than innovative. Equipped with more resources, this cluster seems to have better access to the mainstream news media and decision-makers in Santiago, which reduced their interest in participatory activity at the grassroots level (Participant 11a; 12a; 28a). This is why probably they opt to copy and stay current to their context in relation to media practices, without necessarily experimenting with new ones. On the contrary, marginalised smaller ENGOs and radical grassroots groups were poorer and had to find ways to reach more than a niche public. Having a stronger participatory basis than other SMOs, they have therefore tended to be more inventive in their use of the media, which has transformed them into innovators.

Chapter 5 has shown how a good financial situation and professionalisation can lead SMOs to innovate more. Thus far, this section has shown that the networking capacity of a movement is also relevant in this regard, especially if it is considered as a structural resource. These two aspects confirm the most traditional theories explaining institutional innovation (Cantarello et al., 2012; Jansen et al., 2006; Meseguer, 2016; Paternotte & Kollman, 2014). Social movement learning has been overall a neglected area in the contentious politics literature (Mercea & Yilmaz, 2018), which explains the tendency to rely on theories of practice diffusion in transnational advocacy networks to explain this form of learning (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). But since this section showed that most environmental innovators are in fact poorer, isolated and radical SMOs, resources and networking then do not always matter. Taking this into account, the environmental movement is, therefore, an insightful case of inventiveness that lends support to new emerging theories of media practice innovation. These theories have highlighted cultural patterns, particularly the ability of grassroots communities to be creative and inventive in their use of the media under adverse conditions (Mattoni & Treré, 2014; Rodríguez, 2003; 2011).

### **6.3. The LGBTI+ movement: An integrative network project**

This section analyses the cultural and structural characteristics of the Chilean LGBTI+ movement and compares them with what has been outlined about the environmental movement. The goal is to relate these movement-related factors with the specific way in which LGBTI+ SMOs have responded to hybrid media practices. Differently from environmental organisations, LGBTI+ SMOs have tended to be more innovative than emulative, and their approach to innovation has been predominantly based on ideology and not instrumentality. Crucially, the LGBTI+ movement does not seem to resist the adoption of hybrid media practices. These trends were presented in Figure 6.1 (p. 182). In addition to this, the two more complex hybrid media practices –*citizen editorial committees* and *multi-layered marketing campaigns*– have been developed predominantly by LGBTI+ SMOs, whereas the simpler practices have been adopted more systematically by environmental SMOs (see Chapter 4).

Considering these pieces of evidence, it is clear that the Chilean LGBTI+ movement was more prone to innovate than the environmental movement. However, there is still a segment of emulators that deserves more attention and the reasons why there are no LGBTI+ non-adopters is also intriguing. As outlined in Table 6.1 (p. 183), there are important cultural and structural differences between the environmental and the LGBTI+ movement. Arguably, these differences would be key in explaining why the LGBTI+ movement has, for the most part, responded to today's hybrid media ecology by innovating and privileging constituents' participation in communicative action over other goals.

### **6.3.1. A culture of moderation, consensus and inclusiveness**

After analysing 16 Chilean LGBTI+ SMOs included in this study, which included the most prominent in the country (see Chapter 3), this section has found a strong tendency towards cultural homogeneity in this movement. This contrasts drastically with the divided agenda found in the environmental movement. The LGBTI+ movement is therefore for the most part cohesive and moderate, which results in a unified structure or single culture. This cohesiveness absorbs even the most anti-systemic groups in one way or another within what these movement members define as a 'community of the sexual and gender diversity' (Participant 1b; 2b; 4b). There are of course some ideological differences within the movement, but these do not pose a threat to a common agenda, a consensual set of values and ideological coherence. In other words, although there are differences, they are not large enough to the point of being divisive or preventing deliberation among LGBTI+ SMOs.

First, the analysis has identified one mainstream agenda in the movement that is focused on policy advocacy, legislation, community-building and socio-cultural expression goals at the same time. Furthermore, these goals are all relatively interdependent. Table 5.1 in Chapter 5 (p. 149) showed that there were two different sets of goals in the movement. One set was more political and referred to the social and civil rights of LGBTI+ people, and the other was more socio-cultural and referred to gender identity and performativity, which included those SMOs specialised in feminism, transgender issues and queer politics. The former was more preponderant than the latter as nearly two-thirds

of the sampled SMOs subscribed to it. In contrast, as seen in Table 5.1 (p. 149), the segment of the Chilean environmental movement included in this study represented three different activist agendas, which were grouped in this chapter as two opposite cultural trends: a deep ecology counter-culture and a conservationist mainstream culture with elements of environmental justice. In contrast, the evidence about the LGBTI+ movement makes it difficult to categorise its two agendas into two different political subcultures.

Already during the pilot stage, my study came across two large LGBTI+ movement networks at the national level. A total of ten out of 16 sampled SMOs were members of these networks. In fact, another two SMOs took part in some joint actions with these networks without being formal members. Five out of six SMOs focused on gender identity and performativity were included in one of these networks. These networks will be explored in more detail in the next subsection, but for now they help make the case that many representatives of the minor agenda of the LGBTI+ movement formed alliances with ‘legalist’ or civil rights-oriented SMOs (Leachman, 2014) into what some respondents defined as a common human rights agenda (Participant 1b; 11b; 13b). They participated, formally and informally, in order to obtain victories – even if small– in their respective causes. They also did it because they simply believe in working together for broader human right causes (Participant 15b).

*“We’re always in communication with grassroots and NGOs. We make alliances [with them]. Soon, we’ll organise a summit exclusively with grassroots groups [...] We believe in sociability as an important principle for the struggle of LGBTI+ communities. I talk about sociability and inclusion because we don’t do this only with our peers in the LGBTI+ movement but also all those who defend human rights”*

Participant 13b: Founder Member of LGBTI+ grassroots group based in Santiago and Founder Member of national LGBTI+ advocacy network.

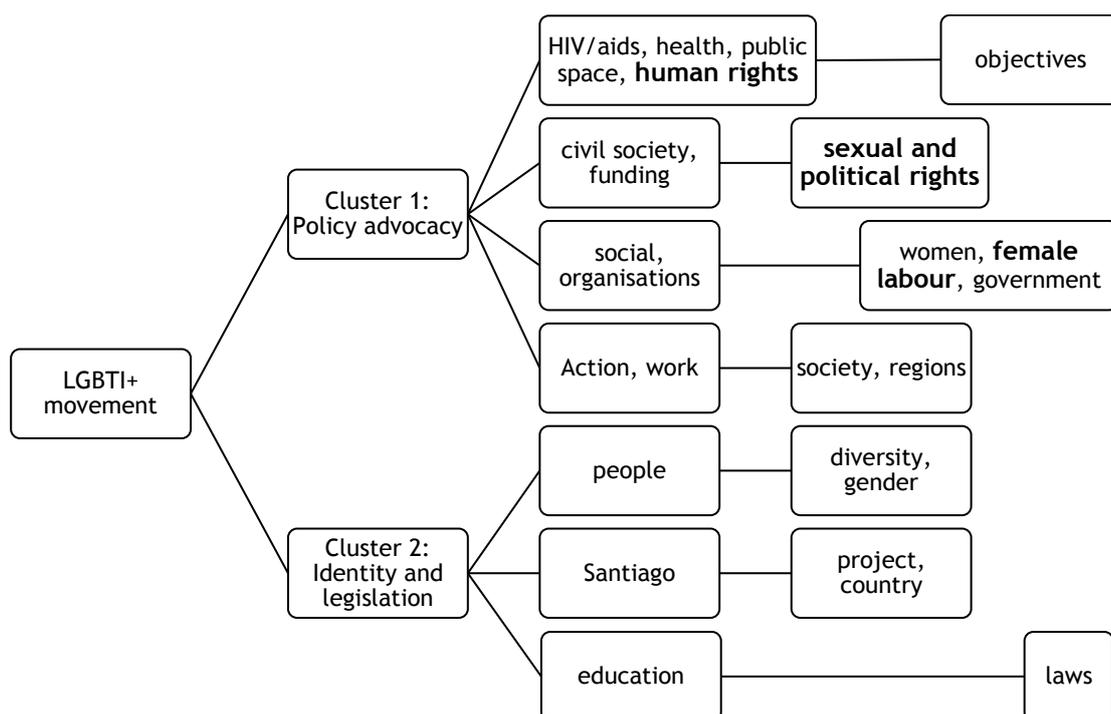
Secondly, and in line with the above, there has been a predominant tendency towards political reformism in the LGBTI+ movement. In total, the sample of 16 LGBTI+ SMOs under study is composed of ten reformist and six radical organisations. Therefore, moderate views represent two-thirds of the movement. This position is well-known for its legalism and its emphasis on cooperating with the government and private firms for both the legal recognition of the sexual and gender diversity and their assimilation to the country's culture (Leachman, 2014; Santos, 2013). Moreover, in the spirit of alliance-making and the common human rights agenda in Chile, where SMOs of different social movements tend to come together, the few radical groups of the LGBTI+ community take part in many round tables with authorities. Participant 13b's quote, presented above, offers a clear-cut example of this. This SMO is considered radical due to its political vision centred on 'queer Marxism'. Overall, the common agenda that integrates LGBTI+ SMOs seem to work well in relation to horizontal interactions between NGOs and grassroots.

Figure 6.6 (next page) shows the results of a cluster mapping exercise of the 25 most salient concepts in the LGBTI+ SMOs' documentation under study. After grouping connected terms together in function of their proximity in the assessed texts, the analysis found two major clusters. This is at first similar to what was found about the environmental movement. One of these clusters shows a path of policy advocacy and the other a path of identity politics and legislation. However, different from the case of environmental SMOs, these two clusters do not seem to oppose each other, unlike the tension between mobilisation and policy-making found in the environmental movement. In fact, it is not so clear that these two paths of action are actually separate.

Advocacy in general is often considered a moderate form of collective action towards policy reform (Diani & McAdam, 2003), which is more evident when considering some of the connected ideas in Figure 6.6: 'government', 'action', 'public space', 'rights' and 'funding', among others. These ideas evoke potential collaborations with authorities and an understanding of social change in terms of institutions and legislation. The other cluster of identity politics is not separate from legislation, as in fact legislation is embedded in this cluster.

Thus, legislative work seems to be connected with and not opposed to gender issues. In this regard, along with ideas evocative of community-building such as ‘education’, ‘people’ and ‘diversity’, the cluster of identity and legislation does not reject ideas evocative of policy advocacy such as ‘laws’ and ‘project’. Considering these points, Figure 6.6 (below) does not show a radical or extreme faction against reformists, meaning there are no clear signs of ideological polarisation. A more accurate description would be that there are two fairly reformist factions, with some dimensions evocative of LGBTI+ radicalism within: transgender and queer demands appear in the legislative path and feminist and labour demands appear in the advocacy one.

Figure 6.6. Cluster map showing connections between the 25 most frequent concepts in LGBTI+ SMOs’ documentation<sup>9</sup>



Moreover, when used as leverage for political influence, mobilisation has been key to ‘politicise’ the movement, as the process is called by some interviewees (Participant 3b; 13b). This outcome has been precisely resisted by

<sup>9</sup> Concepts in bold represent concepts mentioned more than 400 times in the assessed data, in order to highlight their importance.

many environmental SMOs. Politicisation in the case of LGBTI+ activism refers to an intended influence on institutions and the policy and legislative agenda in order to broaden the boundaries of public discussion on civil, gender, sexual and reproductive rights. This is why, ultimately, both surveying their constituents and facilitating their participation in communicative actions, and more generally as well, are so relevant goals for most LGBTI+ SMOs.

The ‘politicisation’ process of LGBTI+ SMOs has been highlighted in the existing literature, particularly in relation to the pervasive orientation towards goal achievement and legality over ideology in LGBTI+ advocacy (Santos, 2013). Santos (2013) refers to this as ‘syncretic activism’, which is particularly visible in feminist and LGBTI+ struggles. In Latin America, the LGBTI+ movement has historically shown a symbiosis of cultural and political dimensions, and covert and overt activity (Encarnación, 2013). The ‘Zamudio processions’ discussed in Chapter 3, and empirically grounded in Chapter 4, have become part of the cultural ceremonies of the Chilean LGBTI+ movement, and yet this does not mean that the movement has lacked a policy dimension (Barrientos et al., 2010; Encarnación, 2013; Steidl, 2016). For this reason, the movement has been able to become a moderate player and discuss policy with the elites, despite its expressive character (Encarnación, 2013).

This tendency towards reformism is present even among radical groups. One of these LGBTI+ grassroots groups, who considers itself as ‘revolutionary’, is focused on the rights of transgender children, an issue of much controversy in a conservative country like Chile (Participant 15b). The interview revealed that this organisation was aware that its demands were too radical in this political context and therefore, in order to win little battles, decided to form an alliance with more moderate but influential NGOs, and work along lawyers and Argentinian advisors to write legislative proposals that could receive serious consideration from decision-makers. They participated in the negotiations for a new ‘Ley de Identidad de Género’ (gender identity law) with authorities and, making some concessions, tried to include a clause about teenagers between 14 and 18 years old. This is an illustrative case of how radical LGBTI+ SMOs

moderated their positions and went far from their comfort zone (i.e. close-knit community) in order to have an influence on decision-making when it is relevant.

*“[We produced] discomfort for the rest of the [LGBTI+] SMOs, because we were going to complicate the demand for new legislation. They were absolutely right, it did get more complicated. The political commission [of a national LGBTI+ network] invited me to be a part of it; we’ve never been part of this front, but we took part in the commission. We saw it as an opportunity for our demands, in addition to giving us access to direct dialogue with the government. We didn’t reach the government in a long time”*

Participant 15b: Founder Member and Researcher of LGBTI+ grassroots group based in Santiago, May 2017.

Finally, with respect to the values of the LGBTI+ movement, once again the data show trends of cohesion. In fact, most of the movement seems to get inspiration from a strong belief in participatory action and trespassing part of the decision-making to their constituency. Virtually all queried LGBTI+ SMOs, regardless of their approach to politics, have felt consistently identified with participatory and inclusive culture. Table 6.4 (next page) shows the ten most salient values and principles highlighted in LGBTI+ SMO documentation.

Overall, the movement is inspired by six out of ten values that connect well with this participatory culture: ‘inclusiveness’, ‘diversity’, ‘equality’, ‘education’, ‘identity’, and ‘support’. While this assertion seems straightforward in the case of ‘inclusiveness’, this conclusion was reached by triangulating all these ideas with concepts employed by a number of respondents when referring to their inclination for inclusiveness when innovating with their media practices. Chapter 5 offers more clarity about these respondents’ narrative about this topic. As a reminder, the same analysis applied to the environmental movement showed various opposed values and a minority of participation-related concepts. In the LGBTI+ movement, values related to community and participation are more salient, i.e. ‘equality’ and ‘support’.

Table 6.4. Ten most mentioned values in LGBTI+ SMOs' documentation<sup>10</sup>

Values	(n)
Work	151
Diversity	123
Health	83
Equality	68
Education	51
Identity	46
Support	39
Inclusiveness	32
Development	30
Prevention	30

Furthermore, the official mission, vision and goals statements under assessment revealed that a total of eleven LGBTI+ SMOs offer community services that generate safe spaces for their constituents to meet, bond and share collective experiences. The provision of services to the community has been documented as an opportunity for Latin American NGOs to design spaces of education and communal health (Corrales, 2017: 61). Overall, the generation of safe spaces is a key aspect of the community-building goals in a movement (Jeppesen et al., 2014). It is likely that the common 'human rights' agenda pursued by two large movement networks is of capital importance in this regard. The agenda places horizontal participation and grassroots work over any other strategy and does so not only as instruments but also as ends in themselves. The caveat of this in relation to the environmental movement is that LGBTI+ SMOs describe their grassroots basis as the whole movement, whereas the former SMOs tend to talk more about the local communities they represent.

The following quote attempts to illustrate the level of commitment of some SMOs to the principles of horizontal participation and grassroots work:

<sup>10</sup> Frequencies were calculated using Nvivo over the total of SMO documentation under analysis.

*“The actor that has to be in the frontline of social change, and lead a revolution, has to come from the grassroots [...] The social capital for this is still very limited in Chile, something that has to do with the dictatorship, but this is why we have to build a grassroots movement”*

Participant 15b, Founder Member and Researcher of LGBTI+ grassroots group based in Santiago, May 2017.

Participant 15b represents a grassroots group that has a particular understanding of inclusiveness, which is in line with an arguably utopian impulse to ‘democratise’ better the LGBTI+ movement. Yet, this group has been identified as an active worker at the policy level, who is open to negotiations with authorities and firms. This illustrates the syncretism of many LGBTI+ SMOs.

A relatively homogeneous culture of consensus and political moderation, and the related trends of participatory politicisation in the movement, contributes to explain why Chilean LGBT+ activists are largely more innovative, and particularly prone to follow an ideological pathway of innovation for three main reasons related to the power of networks and cooperation in general terms. First, cultural homogeneity and ideological coherence have not given room to polarisation like in the case of the environmental movement, which clearly enough has reduced or even co-opted marginal radical agendas that could develop resistance to the diffusion of new hybrid media practices throughout the two large LGBTI+ movement networks in Chile. To be sure, the point is that the lack of non-adopters within the LGBTI+ movement is partly explained by the inexistence of very radical factions going against what is appropriate to their field. This contrasts with the ‘double’ isolation faced by environmental SMOs, both symbolic and physical, where they have generated an aversion for communication channels with other organisations that could diffuse practices. LGBTI+ SMOs seem very well-connected culturally with their peers, open to work with them and, consequently, learn from them in relation to media practices.

Secondly, since Chapter 5 has demonstrated that non-adopters can follow an instrument pathway, in which reformism and resources matter, it is also

possible to see how networking played a role in keeping policy-oriented LGBTI+ SMOs within certain boundaries, and most likely held accountable by other SMOs. In other words, considering the collaboration environment that reigns in these networks, it has been difficult for LGBTI+ SMOs, even the most powerful ones included in this study, to negotiate their own terms with decision-makers, or attempt to do so behind closed doors. As we learned from an environmental reformist non-adopter, a priority for private lobbying is exactly one of the reasons why SMOs stay away from both media innovation and emulation.

Finally, and connected to the above point, all the studied LGBTI+ SMOs aim to reach some level of publicity and they do not regard this as a compromise on their aim to represent the participatory values of their movement. The cultural orientation of the movement led them to create new media practices that could help them subvert dominant discourses and generate new meanings in direct interaction with their constituents. In this regard, a number of respondents have stressed the generation of activist media outlets (e.g. radio broadcasting) and publications such as leaflets, brochures and posters which were often digitalised in some form and shared on social media (Participant 12b). This practice aimed not only to keep their constituents informed about community events they could join, but also about face-to-face debates organised to elaborate and negotiate meanings in relation to their movement and their ideology (Participant 7b).

Nevertheless, there are some caveats in relation to the so well-documented consensus basis of the LGBTI+ movement that has been reiterated throughout this section. Four interviewees have told the story of the LGBTI+ movement in Chile in terms of schisms that have affected them in the recent past (Participant 2b; 3b; 7b; 9b). Many of these divisions have been explained by conflicts over power and representation. In connection with academic debates presented in Chapter 2, it seems reasonable to assume that reformism often becomes mainstream within social movements and can easily marginalise more dissonant positions that aim at deeper social change (Ferree, 2003: 305-306). The data tended to show that conventional media publicity has been an easier task for male gays than other more 'deviant' identities in Chile (Participant 3b).

*“Male gay organisations have taken over the media agenda, which has led to an inexistent news media interest in other organisations and LGBTI+ struggles. I’m talking particularly about the transgender struggle, because it’s been very difficult for them to insert their own discourse and demands [onto the public discourse]”*

Participant 3b: LGBTI+ media activist and advisor of two NGOs based in Santiago, May 2017.

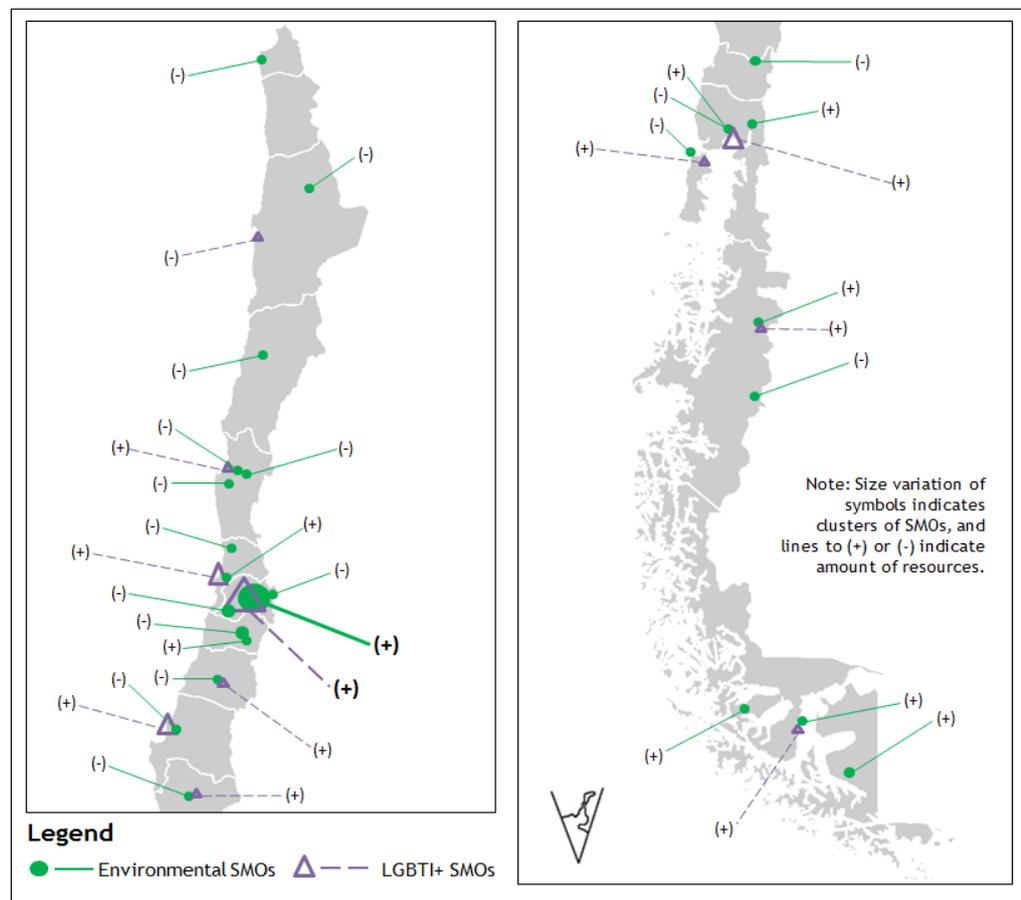
Yet, once these ones marginalised groups, such as lesbians, transgender, queers and people living with HIV/AIDS, became integrated, they tended to experiment with the media much more than male gays. Of the four male gay SMOs in this sample, two were in fact emulators. The most plausible reason for this is that non-mainstream LGBTI+ groups seek public visibility and validation, even if they struggle to obtain it. This diversifies their publics and goals beyond their close-knit reach, which is a very good reason already to combine conventional media practices in the first place (see Section 4.2). In the pre-internet era, LGBTI+ identities always found it challenging to become visible in the news media; consequently, they quickly opted to create their own media outlets (Araiza, 2014). Consequently, it seems that non-mainstream LGBTI+ identities have been from the beginning prone to explore their media ecology for opportunities to break the ‘reclusion’ pattern generated by scarce media attention to their political demands (Steidl, 2016). More so when taking into account that, differently from their environmental counter-parts, also marginalised in their movement, LGBTI+ non-mainstream groups have heavily emphasised cultural expression and community-building goals.

### **6.3.2. Centralised, equal and networked structure at the national level**

The analysis of the structural dimension of 16 SMOs representing the Chilean LGBTI+ movement, including its geographical configuration and resource distribution, demonstrates the high levels of centralisation and integration of the movement (see Table 6.1, p. 183). This means that besides being culturally cohesive, the movement is structurally unified. This reality contrasts vastly with the one of the Chilean environmental movement as it has been stressed earlier.

First, virtually all the movement's composition operates in the Metropolitan area, instead of being territorially dispersed. After mapping the physical presence of all the sampled LGBTI+ SMOs throughout Chile, this research has found that only one-quarter of the movement had a federated structure, which has helped reduce the regional operations and concentrate most of the movement's activity in the capital of the country. Figure 6.7 (below) suggests this structure by indicating where SMOs and their branches are based in Chile, and it compares the situation with the geographical dispersion of the environmental movement.

Figure 6.7. Compared geographical distribution of environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs in Chile

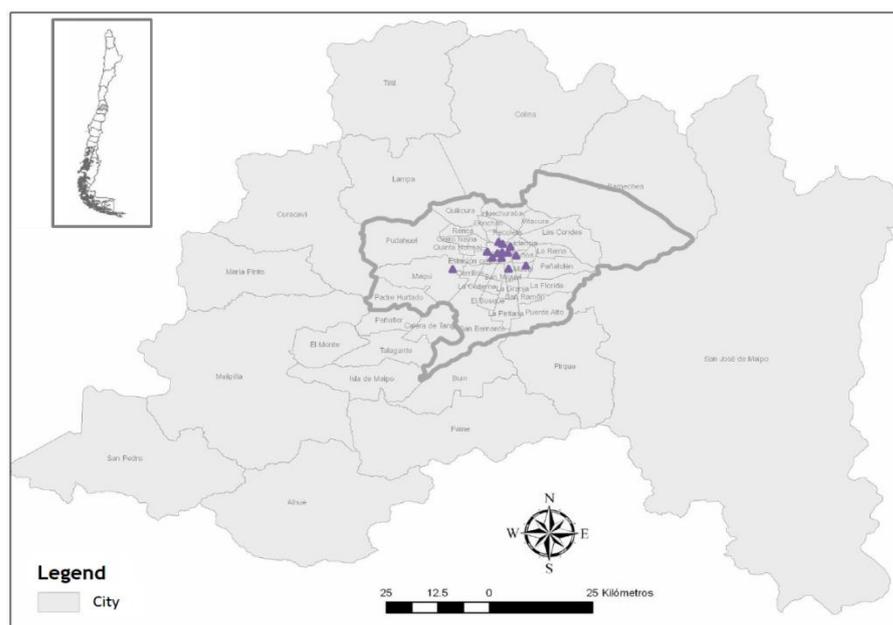


Source: Map design was retrieved from [Chile with Regions - Single Color](#) by [FreeVectorMaps.com](#) in 2018, and complemented with thesis' research data.

The map above reveals, on the one hand, how there are a few operations in regions, and these often take the form of 'regional hubs', meaning that in certain areas where the map shows mid-size triangles, there are various SMOs

operating at the same time. Environmental SMOs, on the other hand, are much more dispersed across the territory and the existence of regional hubs is reduced. The most important LGBTI+ regional hubs are located in Valparaíso, Concepción and Puerto Montt, which tend to be important metropolis after Santiago. Yet, despite this regional presence, the core of the LGBTI+ movement is in the capital. There is only one proper federated SMO with semi-autonomous regional branches in this sample. Another three SMOs have their headquarters in Santiago and a number of regional operations, but these consist of vertically dependent volunteer teams without any level of autonomy. Furthermore, the fieldwork process revealed how close LGBTI+ SMOs are located to each other in the same radius of the capital. This means that the centralisation of the movement at the national level is replicated at the Metropolitan level. Figure 6.8 (below) shows this concentration in Santiago. In comparison to the environmental movement's dispersion in the Metropolitan region, Chilean LGBTI+ SMOs do not seem to operate outside the boundaries of Gran Santiago. Only one organisation seems to get close to these boundaries, but it is still quite well-connected with the rest.

Figure 6.8. Dispersion of LGBTI+ SMOs in the Metropolitan region of Chile



Source: Map design retrieved from CELADE-ECLAC on 23-08-2018 ([www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/poblacion-y-desarrollo](http://www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/poblacion-y-desarrollo)), complemented with thesis' research data.

Since all the studied LGBTI+ SMOs are close to each other, connections and dialogue between them occurs more naturally and frequently than for a movement that is geographically highly dispersed. A number of respondents pointed out that they run periodical meetings in Santiago with other important LGBTI+ organisations, receiving them in their offices or paying them a visit (Participant 1b; 8b; 10b). This is much easier to do when most of the organisations are in the same city and do not have to travel long distances to meet up. In turn, connectedness leads LGBTI+ SMOs to be regularly exposed to relevant information about the movement. This is often used as cues to calibrate their individual strategies and actions to the organisational model presented in Chapter 5, which has linked learning across organisation as a crucial source of explorative behaviour. This could also explain why there is a minority of emulators in this movement. LGBTI+ SMOs appear to be more exposed to examples, so they can either engage more directly by learning from them and applying them to their media praxis, or they can use them as an example to copy the hybrid media practices that their peers have been using.

Secondly, in relation to resources, the analysis of these SMOs' self-declared financial situation has been triangulated with budgetary information when possible. These assessments have allowed seeing how resources are by large equally distributed among LGBTI+ SMOs. This has not been the same for environmental SMOs. Slightly more than half of the LGBTI+ SMOs have declared to enjoy a stable or good financial situation, meaning they are either sponsored by other organisations or have diversified their sources of income beyond fundraising. Many LGBTI+ SMOs have in fact specialised in sales, among other sources of income. This connects back with points made about multi-layered marketing campaigns in Chapter 4, specifically how the two LGBTI+ SMOs that have run these campaigns have sold hybrid merchandising-activist items to their supporters, and then documented their consumer experiences on social media to promote these items and continue selling them online. Overall, the fact that resources are relatively well distributed, and precariousness is less common, implies also less competition between SMOs for funding. In fact, only one out of 16 LGBTI+ SMOs depends mostly on fundraising campaigns.

Similar to how resources are distributed across environmental SMOs, however, the LGBTI+ movement is better funded from Santiago to the austral zone, whereas the North quantitatively receives fewer resources. Numerous conflicts relevant for the LGBTI+ movement exist in this area of the country. Participant 14b has described the coastal zone of the North as highly risky in terms of HIV contagion. The three northernmost regions of Chile have historically had the most elevated rate of HIV/AIDS contagion of the country, a number that at times tripled the national rate (Ministerio de Salud de Chile, 2013: 23-25). HIV/AIDs contagion is a priority issue in the agenda of an important number of LGBTI+ SMOs in this sample. Transgender prostitution and pervasive fear among the LGBTI+ population to express their sexual and gender identity freely are the other two issues of concern in the North of Chile (Movilh, 2018: 41). As noted throughout this chapter, the LGBTI+ movement is particularly focused on its constituency, therefore it naturally tends to intensify its activity where there are more people to be mobilised. The scarce population inhabiting Northern Chile would explain why the LGBTI+ movement has concentrated its activity in the South-central area of Chile instead. Despite this, the lack of resources in regions is not really similar to the case of the environmental movement.

Zooming into some LGBTI+ NGOs' economic situation it will be possible to illustrate better the points made in the previous paragraphs. Table 6.5 (next page) shows the range of funds between six LGBTI+ NGOs that have made available their annual financial report for this study. This represents one-third of all the sampled LGBTI+ SMOs, and specifically 60 per cent of the total NGOs included in this sample. All these NGOs are clustered together in a range between USD 2,000 and USD 50,000, which does not make them necessarily richer than some ENGOs, but certainly helps illustrating that even between NGOs there is some balance.

Table 6.5. SMOs per range of funds according to social movement<sup>11</sup>

Range of funds (USD)	Environmental SMOs (10)	LGBTI+ SMOs (6)
Poorer (less than 50,000)	30%	32%
50,000 - 250,000	10%	34%
250,000 - 500,000	20%	34%
500,000 - 750,000	10%	0%
750,000 - 1,000,000	0%	0%
1,000,000 - 2,000,000	10%	0%
More than 2,000,000	10%	0%



The above point is particularly noticeable when compared to the financial situation of ENGOs. This last argument is made on the ground that a few very rich ENGOs distort the average of the movement, but when looking at the distribution, the majority of the NGOs and most grassroots are actually very poor in comparison. This is not the case in this selection of the LGBTI+ movement. A division between a centralised hub of LGBTI+ organisations and a poorer periphery is thus more diffuse than in the case of the environmental movement.

The resource distribution observed in the LGBTI+ movement matters for how the proportions of innovators and emulators –and the absence of non-adopters– are distributed. This is because innovation generally needs vast or at least stable resources to unfold as a routine behaviour; take R&D investments as a clear of example of this among organisations (Benner & Tushman, 2002). In addition, the little competition between SMOs tends to favour more cooperation and incentivise a more solidary environment, where networks thrive more. Having stable resources and being exposed to other organisations systematically through rich exchanges and debates, makes it possible to increase the chances of cross-organisational learning and diffusion of practices. And if that is not the

<sup>11</sup> The amount of resources per SMO has been retrieved from the most recent annual budget available (net spending).

case, at least it makes examples of adopting hybrid media practices more visible, which are used as a source of emulation among a proportion of LGBTI+ SMOs.

In sum, this section has argued that the form in which this movement is culturally assembled and territorially organised matters for the ways it engages with hybrid media practices. All in all, cultural and structural homogeneity not only promotes inter-organisational diffusion of hybrid media practices but also the consolidation of networks where smaller and younger SMOs can benefit from the communication strategies developed by leading organisations. The diffusion of hybrid media practices is channelled through these rich interconnections, and this process has two effects. On the one hand, most of these organisations can learn from the others and develop their own versions, often experimental, of the four hybrid media practices listed in Chapter 4 and 5. On the other hand, a few others get exposed to certain examples or cues that adopt imitatively in order to be appropriate to their context, which in this case is their movement network.

As an illustration of the above points, the representative from an LGBTI+ SMO explains that the network structure of most SMOs has facilitated a coordinated work in relation to newsmaking tactics. This in turn helps make the case for cooperation between SMOs and more horizontal or flexible decision-making, when faced with opportunities given by a changing media ecology.

*“We try to support each other in some areas, so when eventually we had to speak [to the media], we were as close as possible to the actual discourse of our peer organisations, in a positive light [...] This talks about of a specific way, which is the way of a network of organisations”*

Participant 1b: President of federated LGBTI+ NGO based in Santiago and regions and Political Coordinator of national LGBTI+ advocacy network, May 2017.

Ultimately, this section has shown that in a networked movement, examples of how using the media for activist purposes not only abound but also are easy to observe for most organisations. These points lend support to a more

traditional understanding of innovation in organisational fields (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011). LGBTI+ innovators take advantage of the movement networks to both receive and transfer knowledge about hybrid media practices, and have access to stable resources. The diffusion of practices is expected to run better and more horizontally through activist networks (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Similarly, resources have been theorised as pivotal for any attempt to be an 'ambidextrous' organisation, meaning being able to both explore the environment for new opportunities and exploit existing opportunities in new contexts and for new goals (Cantarello et al., 2012). Consequently, while the environmental movement has served to engage more with novel approaches to innovation, the LGBTI+ movement has confirmed traditional theories of organisational innovation, learning and diffusion.

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has compared the cultural and structural patterns of the two Chilean movements under analysis, with a particular emphasis on how these have influenced their different ways of reacting to hybrid media practices. In relation to this, the main argument presented in this chapter highlighted a crucial difference between two supposedly similar post-materialist movements. The environmental movement seems to be ideologically polarised and lacks cultural cohesion, having more than one agenda and oppositional counter-cultures within. Consequently, the environmental movement is not unified around a common set of participatory values. Furthermore, it is geographically dispersed throughout Chile and segregated by important resource inequalities. Competition over resources has divided environmental SMOs greatly. As a consequence of these structural characteristics, today the movement does not have large networks where SMOs can work with each other, which has ultimately decreased opportunities for them to learn from others both formally and informally. Lacking connectedness with peers, SMOs have decreased their capacity to innovate in relation to their media practices. Emulation is more common in this movement possibly because distant SMOs can copy the example of media practices that they see used on the internet, such as tagging journalists

in their posts. Finally, in a physical but also symbolic isolation from the rest, a few radical SMOs have resisted technological changes and became non-adopters.

Subsequently, the chapter compared this with the situation of the Chilean LGBTI+ movement. It presented it as culturally cohesive and well-connected at the structural level. Instead of being segregated by ideological differences, the LGBTI+ movement has demonstrated to be more prone to commitments towards inclusiveness and participation. The chapter also found that the physical proximity, as well as the higher levels of integration, networking and resource equity between LGBTI+ SMOs, were crucial on generating favourable conditions for the movement to diffuse hybrid media practices horizontally. A common agenda in this movement neutralises radicals and therefore any form of symbolic isolation. Networks also keep lobby-oriented NGOs in constant collaboration with other groups of the movement instead of pursuing their own strategies. This has made the existence of non-adopters less likely in the LGBTI+ movement.

Consequently, these compared cases have highlighted how connectedness –or ‘togetherness’ (Gerbaudo, 2012)– is relevant because innovation generally flows through well-built networks and instances of exchange and cooperation between its units (Meseguer, 2016). Chile has challenging geography for territorial coordination, which makes decentralised and connective communication very difficult. This matters for the environmental movement much more than for the LGBTI+, which has opted for centralising its operations and moderating its approach to policy-making. Yet, despite these numerous constraints, there is a minority of environmental SMOs that have managed to innovate and set examples to follow among smaller ENGOs. This has served to make the case that along with professionalised communications, resources and networking capacity, inventiveness is an important ingredient in the formula of media practice innovation in Chile. In the following and final chapter, the thesis will tie together these findings with those proposed in chapters 4 and 5, evaluate them against the background of existing academic debates and present them as the final conclusions of this thesis.

## Chapter 7. Conclusions

This thesis has aimed to contribute to a better understanding of the different ways in which SMOs created new media practices between 2016 and 2017 in Chile and their main reasons to do so. In relation to this objective, it has also outlined some of the factors that explain noteworthy variations across movement organisations and broader movements regarding their adoption of new media practices. Researchers have historically paid attention to the relation between mediation and social activism, but regarding media practices and the process of creation of them in particular, they have assigned great importance to leaderless grassroots networks at the expense of more formalised and traditional organisations. Existing literature has also focused on Northern austerity- and inequality-related movement experiences more than any other experiences and regions around the world, which has shown the scarcity of studies about less materialist-oriented activism in developing regions and post-authoritarian countries. Moreover, when post-materialist movements have been at the centre of inquiry, scholars have taken for granted their similarities but paid little to attention their differences in turn, even if they empirically have existed and have been of significance. This last gap opened interesting questions about the pertinence of the concept of post-materialism in the Global South.

In light of the above gaps, this thesis has thus focused on environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs in the context of contemporary Chile, specifically the media practices created between 2016 and 2017. These two movements have grown significantly in Chile in recent years and their actions have led to visible manifestations and interesting uses of new technologies, but this has received scarce attention in the literature. After qualitative analysis, guided by the above objectives, the thesis argued that a large number of Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs have developed new ‘hybrid’ media practices in recent years. These hybrid practices have combined and repurposed in novel ways the conventional uses of the media for activist purposes. However, SMOs have not all adopted these hybrid media practices in the same way, nor have they done so for identical reasons, which is why this thesis explored levels of variation.

This concluding chapter summarises the key findings of the thesis and outlines its main contribution to existing theoretical and empirical knowledge about SMOs, media practices and media ecology. In what follows, the chapter will be organised in three sections. The first part of the chapter discusses the thesis' key findings and builds its main theoretical argument, which suggests that both environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs have in fact created new media practices in Chile but in different ways and for distinct reasons. The second section of the chapter discusses the implications of these findings in relation to the various literatures that have studied the process of mediated activism. It thus aims to insert the thesis into overarching academic debates about the influence of today's rapidly changing media ecology on SMO communication. The third and final section identifies some of the main limitations of this study and proposes avenues for further research. It contends that this thesis has developed original conceptual tools to understand better contemporary activist media practices, and yet new comparisons are needed to test and refine these tools in light of other experiences around the world.

### **7.1. Summary of the thesis' key findings**

The research question guiding this thesis had two main parts. The first part aimed to explain in what ways and for what reasons SMOs have created new media practices, and the second part has strived to outline why these practices tended to vary across different SMOs and social movements. Taken together, the three empirical chapters of the thesis have demonstrated that between 2016 and 2017 most of the sampled Chilean environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs have engaged in the creation of new 'hybrid' media practices in one of three possible ways, which were innovation, emulation and resistance. Adopting one way or another was contingent upon SMOs' communication goals and resources. The research process has also made it clear that there were also differences across movements, which were explained by the political culture, and spatial and resource distribution of each movement. Both the framework used in this thesis to understand variation across media practices and SMOs, as well as the empirical findings about Chilean SMOs in particular, are novel and hence contribute to our knowledge of how media practice innovation has taken place in

Chilean activism. They also showed the range of reactions this innovation triggered within movements, and specifically across different types of SMOs.

Chapter 4 addressed the first part of the research question. It outlined the main process by which SMOs have created new media practices and their most common reason to take part in such a process. The interpretation of interview data, in triangulation with an analysis of SMOs' use of websites, Facebook and Twitter, has yielded three relevant findings in relation to the above goals. First, trying to understand how new media practices are developed by SMOs in the first place, the chapter has made it clear that these groups do not start the process of creation of practices from the scratch but rather in constant interaction with their media ecology. In other word, rather than being 'brand new' as it has been often assumed in the past, there is a continuity of conventional practices in the new ones, in combination with new uses as well as renovation and re-contextualisation processes. Specifically, SMOs have in fact created 'hybrid' media practices that combine and repurpose different technologies, routines and content of conventional media practices in new ways. This was done by nearly all the researched environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs in Chile in recent years.

Secondly, in an attempt to better understand the process of development of new media practices, the chapter built a typology of four distinct hybrid media practices that have been created by the organisations under study. Most of the sampled SMOs adopted *selective news feeds* to transfer relevant items of the news agenda to online discussion between constituents in social media platforms. Complementing or sometimes replacing their own alternative media outlets, SMOs seemed to use this transfer of content to keep their constituents informed and mobilised, publicise their actions and generate citizen debate leading to the collective production of discourse and action frames. The second practice is *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*, which was adopted by almost half of the sample. It is a type of hybrid media practice that allows SMOs to use viral-like amplification of issues online as a strategy to attract journalistic attention, and interact with opinion leaders and decision-makers through the mainstream news media. In most cases, this practice partially replaced older strategies to gain media publicity such as press releases, which were considered more

expensive and less participatory. Adopted by a minority, seven out of 41 SMOs, *online editorial committees* were similar to face-to-face coordination meetings used by movement groups to define future communicative action, i.e. editing a press statement. However, since many of these online meetings were arranged via mobile messaging and online chat applications, there is evidence in this study that they included more people remotely and therefore became more participatory. Finally, only a few SMOs adopted *multi-layered marketing campaigns*, a complex type of hybrid media practice used to flexibly produce and reshape offline mobilising messages with constant consultation for constituents' feedback on social media. These offline messages were distributed in merchandising, publications and street advertising, among other formats, in the context of high-impact campaigns.

Thirdly, Chapter 4 has ultimately aimed to establish the chief and most compelling reason for most SMOs to engage in the process of creation of one or more of the charted new hybrid media practices. In this regard, this part of the analysis focused on the common discourse among the interviewees regarding the adoption of new media practices. The findings indicate that SMOs tried to expand the reach of their communications, diversify their audiences beyond the limits of their own movement, and in several cases open more to the participation of their constituents in all or part of their communicative process. It seems that these objectives were generally difficult to achieve with the use of more conventional practices. Interviews have shown that conventional practices have tended to specialise and thus separate audiences and communication channels, and in some cases exclude the constituents of their communicative practice. In sum, the chapter argued that SMOs created new practices in order to expand and diversify their communications, and in that way make them more inclusive in some form.

Chapter 5 addressed the second part of the research question from an organisational perspective that looked into the nature of SMOs. While Chapter 4 has established the most common ways and reasons for the sampled SMOs to create new practices, Chapter 5 has identified variations in how they engaged in the process of creating them. The analysis developed in Chapter 4 to typify

hybrid media practices revealed the existence of variants in how these have been implemented by SMOs. In some cases, combinations and repurposing of different technologies, routines and contents led to information dissemination practices, i.e. online users helping ‘viralise’ SMOs’ claims. In other cases, they led to denser interaction processes between organisations and constituents, i.e. disperse activists together in a mailing list to discuss how to develop a campaign. The research process has thus made evident a contrast between some SMOs that were very strategic in their adoption of hybrid media practices and some others who seemed to be less aware of what they were doing. Yet, the analysis of the latter’s social media posts showed their adoption of at least two of four hybrid media practices: *selective news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*. In accordance to informed grounded theory (IGT) –the method adopted by this research–, these early clues about variations led to comparing SMOs in relation to three different organisational responses to hybrid media practices: innovation, emulation and resistance. These responses were built on the basis of neo-institutional theory. According to the data, they were determined by a series of different factors. The two factors highlighted in this analysis were SMOs’ goals and resources.

Innovation was defined in Chapter 5 as a process by which SMOs initiate the development of new hybrid media practices in a relatively conscious way. A large minority of the sampled SMOs have been classified as innovators because their representatives have provided in the interviews a clear rationale as to why they have created new hybrid media practices. Innovators tended to engage with the four types of hybrid media practices found in this study, not necessarily with all of them at the same time, but at least with more than one simultaneously. The analysis has also indicated the existence of two parallel pathways towards this form of innovation, and following one or another ultimately depends on the main objectives pursued by the organisations and their resources. One ‘ideological’ pathway, common among the vast majority of innovators, was heavily sustained by an arguably ‘authentic’ commitment to citizen participation. In this pathway, SMOs were interested in using the multiple and horizontal communicative approach enabled by hybrid media practices to enhance their constituents’ involvement and thus build bottom-up communicative actions. This

type of innovators were for the most part ideologically radical and representing both NGOs and grassroots groups. They have professionalised to a great extent despite their ambivalent resource basis, meaning that the majority but not all of them have enjoyed a stable financial situation. This built professional capacity has allowed them to combine and repurpose different media practices in sophisticated ways.

The other ‘instrumental’ pathway towards innovation, followed only by a quarter of the innovators, was sustained less on ideological beliefs about participation. In this pathway, SMOs have used the interactive communication affordances of hybrid media practices for political effectiveness. Thus, this part of the chapter explained what political effectiveness has meant for different SMOs, with some more prone to find efficient ways –fewer costs and maximised impact– of communicating with external publics, whereas some others to represent better their constituency in front of decision-makers and opinion leaders, which was understood as gaining political leverage. Broadly speaking, instrumental innovators were all NGOs –so, highly institutionalised and professionalised organisations– who have enjoyed a good financial situation and tended towards reformism. In light of the common resource and capacity patterns across both types of innovators, this part of the chapter concluded that innovation is most likely explained by SMOs’ motivation to be more participatory in their communication efforts, which can be an end in itself for some or a political tool for some others.

Differently from innovation, emulation has been defined in Chapter 5 as a process by which SMOs follow some cues from their activist environment that push them to adopt new hybrid media practices, but without much consciousness about why they do so. A minority of SMOs in this sample have been classified as emulators based mainly on a contrast between their lack of rationale about their adoption of hybrid media practices, and their actual use of some of them as indicated both by their representatives’ statements along with the analysis of their social media and websites. Emulators have tended to adopt *selected news feeds* and *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* only, without engaging with the other two more complex hybrid media practices. The chapter strived to

demonstrate that emulation depends greatly on the action of innovators, who have created new practices and then set an example of how to use them in the first place. But most importantly, emulation is an organisational response that indirectly and unintendedly has facilitated the expansion of media practice innovations and sometimes their modification through emulators' imperfect applications. Since emulators copied what other organisations in their activist field have been doing with the media, there is little ideological commitment to horizontality in this behaviour, and a lack of interest in diversifying their audiences. Conversely, emulators were motivated by appropriateness and legitimacy, which reveals the importance that some SMOs have placed to being accepted within the movement and appear as valid actors before stakeholders. In line with this, the thesis has found that emulators are in fact quite moderate ideologically, highly institutionalised but resource-poorer, and paradoxically less professionalised than innovators. This point has been crucial to reinforce the argument of the consequentialist logic followed by innovators: Emulators did not reflect on consequences, they copied to be part of their social movement field, whereas innovators, with or without resources, have prioritised more complex media practices in order to achieve very specific goals.

A third organisational response to new hybrid media practices, which is referred to in this research as resistance, has been presented in the last section of Chapter 5. This response was defined as a form of non-adoption of media practice innovations in which SMOs have a clear rationale as to why all four types of hybrid media practices have been dismissed. This SMO reaction implied resistance to the pace of change in today's media ecology, hence how they were labelled. Only four out of 41 SMOs were classified as non-adopters based mainly on their representatives' statements and then reconfirmed with social media data. Interestingly for this research, these four organisations belonged to the environmental movement. This contrast between movements has been the starting point for a further comparison between environmental and LGBTI+ SMOs with respect to the movement identity they represent. This topic was covered in detail in Chapter 6. The analysis has shown the existence of two parallel pathways to resistance and following one or another path has depended on the SMOs' main goals and resources. In one ideological pathway, radical SMOs with

an unstable financial situation have dismissed external visibility in front of decision-makers and opinion leaders; instead, they have focused on deeply connecting with their constituents via face-to-face assemblies and meetings. In another pathway, one reformist ENGO with a good financial situation has prioritised lobbying meetings with external publics and dismissed internal work with constituents. In both cases, two common patterns were a limited interest in interacting with multiple publics at the same time, and little professionalisation in the use of the media. Additionally, when opting for including constituents in the communication process, non-adopters have given greater importance to non-mediated communication settings. Once again, even if resources were important to explain innovation, the most important factor that explains how SMOs respond to hybrid media practices is their goals.

Chapter 6 addressed the second part of the thesis' research question from a contextual perspective by looking into the social movement in which SMOs were embedded. Thus, while Chapter 5 has established organisational variations in how SMOs engage in the creation of new hybrid media practices, Chapter 6 has reported variations across the environmental and LGBTI+ movements in relation to the same process. The comparative analysis developed in Chapter 5 indicated three important differences between these two movements as clusters of SMOs. The first difference was the dissimilar proportion of innovators in each movement. The vast majority of the sampled LGBTI+ SMOs have been innovative, whereas only one-third of the environmental SMOs have been classified as innovators, and consequently the proportion of emulators was larger in the latter. A second difference was the specific pathway of innovation followed by most of the innovative SMOs in each movement. LGBTI+ SMOs have been mostly ideologically motivated to set out participative communication processes through the creation of new hybrid media practices, whereas environmental SMOs have been mostly motivated by instrumental goals related to political leverage. The third difference was the presence of non-adopters among environmental organisations only. Resistance has not been found within the Chilean LGBTI+ movement network. The research process has thus demonstrated a contrast across movements: the Chilean LGBTI+ movement was more prone to innovate in the process of creation of new hybrid media practices, and also more

open to constituency involvement in the process, whereas the environmental movement was more ambivalent in this regard and had a tendency to resist this process. Following on from these data, the thesis explored how some of the most important cultural and structural characteristics of each social movement could help explain their differences in relation to innovation, emulation and resistance.

The culture of the Chilean environmental movement has been examined in Chapter 6 by collecting and interpreting statements about two topics in the interview data: broader movement networks and instances of collaboration and conflict between SMOs. This analysis has shown important ideological cleavages and a weak culture of consensus within the environmental movement, factors which have contributed to witness more attempts to resist the pace of change of today's complex media ecology. Additionally, it has been argued that the coexistence of various national networks representing a distinct ideological position, and the lack of collaboration between them, has adversely affected the possibilities of horizontal cross-organisational learning that could incentivise more innovation within this movement. The structure of the environmental movement has been studied by observing the geographical and resource distribution of the sampled SMOs and their respective branches. This analysis has shown a high level of territorial dispersion, with a few relevant cases of physical isolation. It has been argued that there are two types of distance in this regard, a physical and a symbolic distance. These two forms of distance are related to the points about networking made above. In most cases, resource inequality came along with dispersion as metropolitan environmental SMOs managed more resources than isolated organisations in regions. Learning across SMOs has thus been more complex under these geographical conditions, whereas unequal access to resources has probably made it even more difficult for some organisations to actually innovate or even emulate hybrid media practices.

In contrast to the environmental movement, both the cultural and structural characteristics of the LGBTI+ movement have contributed to explaining why it has been more prone to innovate and less likely to resist the creation of new hybrid media practices. The movement appears to be culturally cohesive and well-connected, whereas structurally it was centralised and more

equal in terms of resource distribution. Instead of several different parallel networks like in the case of the environmental movement, there is only one large and encompassing LGBTI+ network in Chile. This network operated on the basis of reaching consensus thanks to the coordination of monthly meetings where a common policy and cultural agenda of the movement has been set despite some discrepancies between SMOs. Both cooperation between organisations and technical assistance to poorer members have regularly taken place in this network. Ideological differences have not been strong enough to isolate network members and supporters in the long run. Further to this, the movement had little geographical dispersion and isolation as most organisations were based in Santiago. As a consequence of this, opportunities for cross-organisational learning have been systematic within this movement (Meseguer, 2016), and resistance has not necessarily gained terrain due to a lack of ideological and resource cleavages between SMOs. In sum, the analysis has concluded that the LGBTI+ movement has found better opportunity structures, a good 'momentum' in Chile to adapt to a changing media ecology, and could be defined as more inventive, innovative and media-savvy than its environmental counterpart. It has ultimately shown the relevance of resources for media practice innovation and ideology for resisting or adapting to a changing media environment.

## **7.2. Main empirical implications and contributions to the literature**

The sets of findings presented in the previous section started demonstrating the various contributions that this research has made to the study of mediated activism. In the first place, the thesis stands as probably one of the first examinations to the origin of new activist media practices, bridging various literatures that have remained largely disconnected. It has also strived to answer an under-explored question about the role that SMOs play in the process of media practice innovation. In this regard, it formulated this question in a direct and simple manner, which has barely been the case in previous studies about activist media practices and hybrid media ecology. Themes related to the origin of new media practices, and variations between activist organisations, have tended to be tangential in the literature. Ultimately, through an

examination of communicative aspects in particular, the thesis has contributed to gain a broader understanding of Chilean non-institutional politics, more specifically local environmental and LGBTI+ movements and their media practices from a comparative approach. As follows, these three points will be explored to address the major theoretical implications of this thesis.

In relation to the emerging research programme on media hybridity, this thesis has made a noteworthy theoretical contribution by explaining the process of creation of new hybrid media practices. Understanding how the process works and what motivates SMOs to do so has been crucial because previous studies have not addressed this in its full complexity. The notion that activist groups combine different media practices, and their related contents and routines of production and consumption has been documented as an empirical fact in recent research (Chadwick, 2014: 54; Lawson-Borders, 2003: 94; Theocharis, 2011). However, there has been insufficient description of how hybrid media practices actually work, and why they are created in the first place. Since the thesis started from these questions, it has been able to reconfirm, based on thick data, that hybrid media practices actually exist in the field of contemporary Chilean activism, and are adopted by most of the researched SMOs. In fact, beyond this evidence, the thesis has shown that there is more than one way of combining and repurposing conventional media practices in novel ways. In other words, there are various forms of hybrid media practices. This is an original contribution to the field since there were no categories built in this regard prior to this study.

The typology of four different hybrid media practices developed in the thesis has various implications to the literature. First, it allows us to define and describe hybrid media practices with more precision than before thanks to clear-cut empirical illustrations of how different conventional practices get combined and repurposed today with the example of activist communications. Secondly, it has established a hierarchy between more and less sophisticated media practices based on their combinations of communication logics. In this regard, the thesis has emphasised the relevance of understanding the simplicity of *selected news feeds*, through which SMOs seek to disseminate and comment on the mainstream news in their social media. This simplicity is contrasted with the increased

complexity of *citizen editorial committees*, through which SMOs share both mainstream news and social media content at the same time in private group messages in order to make real-time collective decisions to modify subsequent content emissions. The former practice implies two steps, from the news to the online forum, whereas the latter implies at least four to five different steps. This hierarchy is important because it will allow in the future having better parameters to discern what is new and what has already become conventional in the field of activist media practices.

Another contribution of relevance to the existing literature has been the conceptualisation of *intermedia agenda-setting processes* as a type of hybrid media practice adopted by SMOs in the context of Chilean activism. The process of influence of mainstream news media on each other has been addressed in the original work of McCombs (2005) on agenda-setting theory, and recently expanded by various studies exploring the occurrence of this process between weblogs, Twitter and mainstream news media (Messner & Distaso, 2008; Parmelee, 2013; Ragas & Kioussis, 2010; Sweetser et al., 2008). Furthermore, the logics behind topics' transfer of salience from discussions on social media to news stories on the mainstream media has been present in Chadwick's work, specifically on what he defines as 'hybrid news systems' (2011: 3-4). These processes have been very well described by a number of interviewees in this study. This means first that the empirical evidence has confirmed that SMOs seem to understand intermedia agenda-setting processes. Secondly, and most importantly, the evidence shows that after understanding them, some SMOs have managed to pilot their emissions of online content in order to generate these agenda-setting processes themselves. In this regard, given the actions of more than 15 SMOs under study, *intermedia agenda-setting efforts* have been established now as an activist media practice, and this stands as an original contribution to the field of hybrid media practices. Additionally, this practice would be unthinkable without its context, which is a hybrid media ecology where several technologies co-exist and converge, and where SMOs have found ways to multiply their publicity platform beyond a single medium of communication. This has implied that SMOs no longer resorted to conventional practices centred only on attracting journalistic attention but rather on new practices where their

constituents could take part of the control over the production and distribution of content on several media platforms and outlets at the same time.

Besides *intermedia agenda-setting efforts*, the other hybrid media practices discussed in the thesis have confirmed and added to some aspects of the existing literature as well. *Selective new feeds*, on the one hand, have shown that not all the information that activist organisations publish online is ‘alternative’ or ‘dissident’. In many cases, SMOs helped broadcasting mainstream news stories published already in newspapers, radio, TV stations and online media outlets in order to keep their communities informed and allow them to have a critical opinion about political events. This is a dimension of activist communication that has not received the same attention than the generation of alternative news. It helps understand better the link of SMOs with their media environment, which adds to a few studies that have explored links between consumption of news and mobilisation (Boulianne, 2009; Valenzuela, 2013; Wright, 2015). *Multi-layered marketing campaigns*, on the other hand, have highlighted the often-neglected importance of marketing and advertising in the context of social activism. The elements of marketing and advertising present in *multi-layered marketing campaigns* are of course far from how we know them in the business sector. They have been deeply transformed so SMOs can constantly ask movement constituents for feedback and treat them as co-producers rather than consumers of this campaign information. However, it is interesting to see how some SMOs do not necessarily close themselves to certain ways of communicating their messages today. The only environmental SMO that has adopted *multi-layered marketing campaigns* is in fact a radical organisation but still resort to a media practice that was originally created for commercial purposes. Once again, this lends support to the conclusion that the hybrid media ecology has opened various new opportunities for SMOs to communicate in ways that are more complex than before and eventually hold some power to reshape conventional practices in relation to their activist goals.

As outlined at the beginning of this section, the thesis has also explored the engagement of SMOs —as a particular type of activist group— in the creation of new hybrid media practices. The previous section indicated the diverse

engagements that can be theorised about SMOs and media practices, which are innovative, emulative or resisting organisational behaviour. Additionally, it addressed two innovation pathways in relation to the creation of practices; it revealed the relative importance of emulative behaviour; and it hinted at various reasons to resist the logics of the hybrid media ecology among SMOs. The thesis ultimately contends that not all SMOs created new hybrid media practices in the same way or for the same reasons. There were crucial cultural and structural differences between organisations and between the social movements they represent. This is key because most existing research on this topic has generally started from the general assumption that all movement groups are inventors of media practices and then quickly moved on to explain the effects of using new practices on themselves organisationally and on their environment (Mattoni & Treré, 2014). This thesis has focused on what happens before these effects take place, which has helped identify diverse forms of engagement to the media ecology among relatively similar activists. This argument adds an original layer of comparison to the emerging study of activist media practices.

In relation to innovation of media practices in particular, Rodríguez (2011) has made important contributions to understanding the reasons why movement communities have avoided conventional media practices and invented new forms of communication in Colombia. One of these reasons is the construction of social fabrics affected –or damaged– by hostile environments (Rodríguez, 2011). Mercea (2011; 2013) has made an insightful argument about how more hierarchical SMOs have used new media practices to mobilise constituents, catalyse deliberation among them and enable their self-organisation in protest events. Yet, Mercea (2013) did not find convincing evidence that SMOs have managed to include their social media audiences into internal decision-making processes. This differs from Constanza-Chock's arguments (2013) as they have ventured to claim that social movements have become more effective in challenging power structures when adopting new hybrid media practices, because these practices allow them to become more participatory and include different constituents' narratives in their texts and communication tools. There has been a rich debate in relation to the participatory aspects of creating hybrid media practices, and this thesis timely joins this exchange. It has demonstrated

how most of the SMOs classified as innovators of hybrid media practices follow an ideological path in which their commitment towards horizontal communication matters greatly. Now, it should be noted that Chile is not in any way similar to Colombia in relation to violence; however, it does share in common a trend of demobilisation (Delamaza, 2015; Jocelyn-Holt, 1998). Saavedra (2015: 44) has argued that the pervasive climate of repression, which characterised most of Chile's transition to democracy, forced social movements to (re)generate social trust by means of 'connective' (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012) and close-knit associations, such as families and groups of friends. This is very similar to the adverse context described by Rodríguez (2011), which ultimately explains how movement communities create new media practices to keep internal bonds alive and safe from external influences. All in all, this thesis confirms the participatory motivations behind adopting new hybrid media practices as it can be broadly found in the existing literature (Constanza-Chock, 2013; Rodríguez, 2011). It also suggests that the context definitively matters, specifically the layout of civil society in a demobilised, repressive and yet economically successful country such as Chile.

Another important implication of the above points has been the concept of inventiveness explained throughout this thesis, especially in Chapter 5. The idea has been borrowed from the work of Mattoni and Treré (2014) and Rodríguez (2011) on media practices. According to Rodríguez (2011: 403), having deeply connected communities from within, thanks to the use of their own media, has a conclusive implication: grassroots communities in a complex media environment start to have a profound commitment to community-building, a vast knowledge of CMC and, above all, 'immense creativity in designing strategies to draw people in and entice them to produce their own media, on their own terms.' Mattoni and Treré (2014) have described today's hybrid media ecology as a space of 'experimentation and inventiveness' for activists due to the increased number of opportunities they face to blend and recycle media and interact with denser audiences. This is no less true in the example of the SMOs analysed in this research. Money has been important in these cases but not to the extent that it would be expected in relation to innovation. The same can be said about other resources such as membership and staff members. A large number of

ideologically motivated innovators did not have a stable financial situation and were considered as radical politically speaking. Conversely, most emulators were highly institutionalised and responded to a reformist stance; half of them handled higher budgets. So, creativity matters as much as resources in the development of hybrid media practices, and this is possibly quite connected with radicalism and commitments to horizontality.

Further to the above conclusion, we have seen throughout this thesis that Chile stands for two major contradictions, advanced market economy but fragmented associational life on the one hand, and high consumption of media content (i.e. TV) but almost null access to media representation on the other hand. Part of the Chilean civil society can create new media practices under these constraining conditions, despite material resources to do so, which ultimately highlights one more time the relevance of inventiveness in today's media activism. This is a key lesson to be considered about post-materialist SMOs in Chile. The development of new media practices is still a marginal area in the study of the relationship between social activism and media, but it really helps understand how actors deprived of resources can actually manufacture creative ways to send messages to society and prompt a change in society and politics. Since there are at least two different and somehow opposite pathways to innovation among the studied SMOs, there is also an important contrast between SMOs according to their goals, which should not be dismissed when accounting for SMO activity in Chile more generally. In this context, instrumentality still matters for a fraction of SMOs, particularly environmental organisations, which tells better the story of post-materialist activism in Chile. The environmental movement emerged before the dictatorship; it was dismantled during Pinochet's regime, and subsequently repressed during the transition to democracy. Conversely, the LGBTI+ movement started to emerge as a community of cultural contestation to the dictatorship in the 1980s for the first time in Chile, and has thrived during the democratic consolidation of the country. Did these two movements face a distinct media ecology, proper of their times? If they did, did this influence their different level of media-savviness and creativeness today? This is certainly a rich avenue of further research.

The thesis has also pointed out that there is more than one form of resistance to the adoption of hybrid media practices. It showed that most of the non-adopters resisted the changing media ecology because of ideological interests in staying close-knit via ‘old-fashioned’ face-to-face communication settings. One ENGO, in contrast, was open to external publics but trusted more direct lobbying than media publicity as a pathway to interact with decision-makers in an effective way. In both cases, it seems that non-adopters ultimately wanted to be in total control of the messages they produced. They did not tailor them according to the interests of other publics such as their constituents, the public opinion or journalists. This matters because it first confirms that not all activists have a real engagement with this complex media ecology, and secondly because it helps avoid simplistic causal lines between radicalism and innovation, and reformism and emulation. Non-adopters can be moderate and not always radical, which determines their communication goals. Nevertheless, the real reasons for them to resist this new media ecology lie in what they have learned over time about conventional media practices. Simply put, it seems like what has worked for them in the past is very likely to be maintained, and this has much to do with risk aversion than anything else. Risk aversion is an organisational behaviour as expected as exploring new practices in most organisational fields, particularly among SMOs (Cantarello et al., 2012; March, 1991; Wells, 2015). Not all SMOs were inventive and many considered themselves as successful exactly because they have avoided certain risks. Most importantly, the interplay between innovators and non-adopters is crucial to outline the creation of new media practices as a negotiated process. Non-adopters are aware of new forms of activist communication, but have decided to ignore or dismiss them. Dismissing new practices sends a message to other SMOs about their identity as an activist group (Mattoni & Treré, 2014; Yates, 1997), and it ultimately forces innovators to include more ‘pedestrian’ repertoires in their hybrid media practices to be in touch with actors who are digitally unreachable.

Finally, this research has found a high number of SMOs –23 out of 41 under study– who have not innovated. On the contrary, they ‘copied and pasted’ what other organisations have done with the media, this in order to remain current, properly adapted to their context and in some cases comply with mandates

attached to specific budget items. These reasons have little to do with the affordances of hybrid media practices. For this reason, such an emulative behaviour lends support to well-documented 'exploitative' behaviour among firms and institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; March, 1991), which in turn challenges wide-held assumptions among hybridity scholars that all new generations of activists are likely to be innovators or learn in conscious ways (Chadwick, 2012; Karpf, 2012; Rodríguez & Miralles, 2014; Vromen, 2017). To be more precise, both Karpf (2012) and Vromen (2017) have identified organisational 'mimicking' as a situation that takes place after a wave of innovation; but they have not addressed emulation as a phenomenon or identified its importance to the diffusion of new practices. Clemens (1993) and McAdam (1995) have previously explained SMO emulation much better than their successors, but they took some distance from neo-institutionalist theory by exploring how learning has been connected with 'spin-off movements' or imitative waves across a field of SMOs. This discussion did not consider communications in specific. In their original explanation of isomorphism trends within organisational fields, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) made a useful and still relevant distinction between vertical coercion and horizontal imitation. Despite some differences, these two mechanisms share in common the absence of rational learning and the importance of non-material rewards based on either compliance or adaptation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In consequence, this thesis's findings add to this overarching debate by highlighting the relevance of emulation and how neo-institutional understandings of this behaviour are still valid. The data have shown a contrast between lack of awareness about hybridity and actual use of a few hybrid media practices (a total of 18 SMOs), which proves that learning is not as widespread among activist groups as the contemporary literature has assumed. Ultimately, and timely, this point sheds light on the process of expansion of new media innovations. It can be an accident, an unintended consequence (Yates, 1997), which still plays a role in the future and possibly inevitable normalisation of what were new hybrid media practices at some point in Chile's history of mediated activism.

The pertinence of inserting the thesis's findings into the neo-institutionalist tradition seems very clear. The same can be said about structuration theory.

Chapter 2 introduced some of the key contentions of Giddens (1984; 1991) about the reproduction of the existing socio-technological structure in the process of creation of new practices. From a structurationist perspective I showed that some environmental and most LGBTI+ SMOs played a role in shaping their socio-technological environment in Chile. However, this was only possible if there was a group of emulative expanders who adopted and repeated new hybrid media practices, which helped build the idea that the media ecology was not only challenged but also institutionalised over time (Giddens, 1984: 2; Yates, 1997: 170). Furthermore, resistance was conceived only in relation to the lack of enactment of new hybrid media practices (Yates, 1997: 167). This is why this thesis has emphasised network relationships between different types of SMOs: Without connectivity, it is not possible to have a holistic understanding of the influence of innovators over non-adopters, who define themselves in function of the former, and also the influence of emulators in the reinforcement of innovations (Lamsal, 2012: 119-120). Thus, despite being more than 30 years old, both organisational and structuration theories certainly demonstrate their importance in today's analysis of activist media practices.

In relation to the cases of study of this project, the thesis has had the chance to explore some key aspects of Chilean civil society in general. It has been reiterated throughout this thesis that Chile has received little attention in contemporary research on mediated activism. In more recent times, as discussed in Chapter 2, a few local scholars have examined the role of social media in the highly visible mobilisation processes that have been taking place in the country from 2011 onwards (e.g. (Cabalín, 2014b; Millaleo, 2011; Scherman et al., 2015; Valenzuela et al., 2012). Some studies have also examined the response of mainstream news media to these mobilisation processes (Cabalín, 2014a; 2014c; Millaleo & Cárcamo, 2013). But this research has been focused mostly on student mobilisations and limited sections of environmental activism, with little engagement with LGBTI+ activism and a diverse array of environmental causes. Moreover, in line with the divisions that have characterised the study of mediated activism, the above research has not addressed the current media ecology in its hybridity because it has discussed the mainstream news media and CMC as two separate realities: either Facebook and Twitter or newspapers and

broadcasting. Consequently, having documented the holistic communication experiences of environmental and LGBTI+ movements, this thesis has made an important empirical contribution to the study of Chilean mediated activism. It has also put the Chilean case on the map of the emerging literature on hybridity, since cases outside the US, Europe and North Africa have been visibly scarce.

Most importantly, although it is difficult to generalise from the Chilean case to other latitudes in the Global South –which is something to be discussed in the following section–, at least it has been possible to gain a better understanding of post-authoritarian societies in South America. This is in line with the opportunities that single case studies open to understand similar cases to those under in-depth examination (Gerring, 2006; Yin, 2014). The thesis has made the case that today's media ecology is highly dynamic not only in consolidated democracies but also in a mid-income country like Chile. Media technologies, routines and contents are becoming more intertwined in Chile, and consequently 'digital native' individuals and groups are less likely to understand divided logics between 'older' and 'newer' media. In this regard, it seems very clear from this study that such an environment has served as a driver for organised activists to experiment with different media logics, platforms and outlets in order to spread their messages and build their spaces of human interaction. In summary, despite being less politically and socially mature than other countries, there is here evidence to assert that Chile stands as a rich context of media practice innovation in South America. There are numerous real-life implications derived from this assertion, but possibly the most important one may take the form of a lesson for SMOs in the near future: Without vast resources, but a big deal of inventiveness and teams of volunteers, SMOs can innovate new hybrid media practices that can put them in direct contact with their constituency and include them in their communicative actions. In sum, the process of development of hybrid media practices as described here can have some resonance in other contexts in Latin America but also in Europe or mid-income countries around the world. Only further research will give a better sense of this resonance.

In relation to the above point, now that we have more knowledge about this region, this country and these movements, it has been possible to evaluate the importance of organisations in the process of innovation. As it was carefully expected from the beginning, the logics of post-authoritarianism have made SMOs very important in Chile, principally because spontaneous movements have struggled to emerge. The research has found that institutionalisation is in fact a very important factor in both the innovative and emulative adoption of new hybrid media practices. Therefore, in an attempt to bring organisations back to the centre of the analysis of mediated activism, the thesis has found that SMOs are active shapers of the media ecology due to their power to create new hybrid practices that set the grounds for waves of technological imitation, expansion and refinement. It seems to be the case that SMOs have played a much more important role than individuals and institutions in this regard.

Among SMOs' main reasons to 'play' with the media in creative ways, the thesis has highlighted the importance of horizontal participation and inclusive communication. NGOs are generally not necessarily known for playing this role but rather for obeying to very delimited mandates to enhance socioeconomic development in countries recipients of foreign help (Baur, 2011a; Bendaña, 2006; Lang, 2012). NGOs have lacked a democratic mandate for representing the people whose needs they claim to represent (Baur, 2011a). Existing research on Northern NGO's digital communication strategies has indeed found little evidence of interactive uses of social media oriented towards citizen participation (Waters, 2007; Waters & Jamal, 2011). However, the thesis shows that in Chile, a mid-income country that has overcome its status of recipient of Official Development Assistance (ODA), environmental and LGBTI+ NGOs have moved towards less instrumental goals in 2016 and the new communications environment seems to be fitting well for these emerging needs. Powers (2015) has discussed how human rights NGOs do not have a niche interest like interest groups but rather represent a struggle for common goods, and similarly Lang (2014) has highlighted the importance that many NGOs give to public engagement and participatory action. Thus, these ideas are not completely new, but have had little application to the specificities of media practices. The underlying reasons for this apparent change go beyond the media aspects of

activism, and therefore beyond the scope of this thesis, but certainly are significant and could be the starting point for studies focused on the evolution and overlapping of social movements and NGOs in Chile, better known as NGOisation of social movements (Álvarez, 2009).

In conclusion, this thesis's main argument has contended that most hybridity scholars have tended to focus on the role played by mobilised individuals, without formal affiliations, in the creation of new hybrid media practices. These individuals have been connected via online for the most part and with little resources on hand. It has been a necessary step in current research to better understand how activists' precariousness, in combination with cultural impetus, is key in inventing new practices (Atton, 2003; 2010; Lang, 2012; Mattoni, 2012; Treré & Mattoni, 2016). However, as it grew, this literature casted a shadow over what hierarchical organisations, often carrying vaster material and immaterial resources, are doing in the meantime in the same changing media ecology. Evidence from Chile, where civil society has evolved slowly and movements have reached a certain level of maturity just a few years ago, SMOs have not been resting on their laurels, preserving their 'favourite' old formulas of communication from obsolescence. They have been instead active shapers of their media landscape, at least for the most part. This case helps see how SMOs' actions and interactions have transformed the public communication environment in which they operated.

### **7.3. Limitations of this thesis and future research projects**

This thesis has contributed with what is possibly one of the first comparisons between South American post-materialist movements, and between their related organisations and practices in the context of a rapidly changing media ecology. An in-depth examination of this kind has not been a priority in previous studies about media practices and SMOs. Due to this level of originality, the investigation required inductive research using informed grounded theory (IGT), and thus combining exploration and explanation iteratively. This is why the thesis has faced some limitations related to the generalisability of its findings and also in relation to themes that have remained unexplored. These limitations

are addressed in this final section in order to provide transparency as to how these research findings are valid and can be refined in further investigative work.

The first limitation of this study is related to the difficulty of making broad generalisations based on its findings with respect to other countries, movements and organisations. This thesis surveyed the case of environmental and LGBTBI+ SMOs in Chile, taking a particular snapshot in 2016 and 2017. Consequently, it does not make a claim to representativity. Chile as a single country case has worked very well for this research. It combines a well-functioning democratic regime, an advanced media market and high digital literacy rates with an emerging but still weak civil society (Delamaza, 2015; Meseguer, 2016; Valenzuela et al., 2012). This is not a common combination in the Global South yet it is highly interesting for the study of SMOs and their practices. But, due to these very singularities, Chile does not stand as an accurate representation of how South American countries are in general. In fact, most of the Global South countries do not share these particular features, either because democratisation movements have had a long history in some developing countries, or because the technological market is still very backwards in some latitudes. Consequently, this thesis' findings cannot be directly applied to other countries of the region as universal laws (Gerring, 2006). Same with the timeframe of this investigation, which matched the fieldwork process between 2016 and 2017. These findings are based on a snapshot that revealed the contemporary reality of the Chilean media ecology and SMO practices. In any case the findings could be extrapolated to previous decades or times to come. These spatial and temporal limitations were likely to be expected. Chapter 3 has accounted for the main reasons to choose a case study as a research approach: It has allowed studying one single country in-depth and generate theoretical insights from this depth about a very specific gap in the existing literature on SMOs and media practices (Gerring, 2006; Stake, 1995). But as such, this approach offers a poor basis for generalisation (Stake, 1995: 7).

As an example of the above points, the thesis has argued that SMOs' institutionalisation and professionalisation matter for media practice innovation, but this is most likely because spontaneous and loosely coordinated movements

have not thrived in Chile for at least 20 years. Once grassroots reemerged in the 1990s, political parties soon absorbed them and made them part of the transitional governments with some ministerial and administrative positions (Foweraker, 2002; Jara, 2012; Schild, 1995). In line with the NGOisation trends observed in most of the continent (Álvarez, 2009), the above conditions opened opportunities for more structured groups to accumulate resources and influence during the Chile's transition to democracy. This has not necessarily been the case of all South American countries; Colombia, for instance, has had for a long time a vibrant grassroots community life amidst the constant menace of civil war and drug-related crime (Foweraker, 2002; Rodríguez, 2011).

Moreover, post-materialist movements and SMOs as specific units within them have been sampled and compared in response to gaps in the literature. But this specific selection hinders a direct application of some ideas to materialist movements and other units within them such as movement networks and online groups. This is because their nature may be at times very different. Movements centred on welfare benefits and redistribution of wealth, for example, have most often operated under the guidance of unions and resorted to disruptive visible events to gain media coverage (Cabalín, 2014a; Cottle, 2008), which makes it difficult to determine how they would create new formulas to become more horizontal internally. Networks are complex clusters of assembled individuals and groups coordinated across borders (Crossley, 2007), which have little in common with brokered, smaller and singular SMOs. Close-knit communities that exist only on the internet are by definition more participatory due to the way in which membership and decision-making are validated through personalised online participation (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Earl & Schussman, 2011). Most of the types of hybrid media practices identified in this research cannot be conceived without connections with the offline world, and are suited to interact with a range of different external publics, which might escape from the interests of close-knit and online-only groups. To be precise, this point is not to say that these movements and groups could not create new media practices. On the contrary, it is very likely that they have done so. However, it is important to highlight how difficult would be to apply directly the concepts built by this thesis to other forms of activism, and generalise from these applications.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, broadly speaking the concepts and findings of the thesis can be applied and contrasted with other similar activist experiences in the world. The thesis has designed an evidence-based taxonomy of SMOs according to their organisational response to the creation of new media practices in a changing environment, which resulted into the identification of innovators, emulators and non-adopters. It also compared two similar movements and found important cultural and structural differences between them, and such differences were associated to their specific ways of innovating and resisting new practices. These concepts should be tools for comparisons. Along that process, these tools may be tested in new contexts, refined and even contested, which would open a new area of inquiry centred on the creation of new activist media practices, and how and why these processes take place.

Since this research is adding to an emerging research agenda on activist media practices and the hybrid media ecology, it would enrich the debate if the findings were contrasted with ongoing grassroots experiences against social inequality in Europe, because now scholars could actually readdress variations between complex practices and across movement groups. Same can be said about environmental and LGBTI+ movements in Latin America. While not all this thesis' findings can be generalised across South America, we need to acknowledge that Chile does stand as a good representation of the region in three political aspects: its recent transition to democracy, its polarised civil society and its neoliberal policies (Álvarez et al., 1998). Furthermore, other similar post-materialist movements have started to thrive in Chile during the time this thesis was written, such as feminism and animal rights activism. Thus, it would be expected that in other latitudes or other movement experiences within Chile, new forms of hybrid media practices might emerge, expanding on the list of four practices proposed in this study. Following up questions along these lines would look like this: Are there more than four hybrid media practices? What conventional practices do they combine and change, and why? Moreover, it would be also expected that ideologies, goals and resources varied greatly depending on the type of actor under study and the environment in which it operated. Further to this, some factors of vital importance in this research may be less relevant in other contexts. SMOs' resources serve as a good

example as in other contexts grassroots are more pervasive and yet very precarious, and finding out how they create new hybrid media practices could be quite insightful to understand better the concept of inventiveness developed throughout this thesis.

Another limitation of this study was that some themes remained unexplored. The literature consulted for this project was vast and diverse, and so was the amount of data used to explain only two social movements in one country. Three levels of comparisons have been made, between types of hybrid media practices, between organisations adopting or not adopting these practices and between the movements in which these organisations were embedded. In consequence, this thesis became very complex and some avenues had to be closed in order to privilege the development of a coherent and clear argument. The time and resource constraints of this PhD project also contributed to this decision.

First, it should be acknowledged the limited analysis of the Chilean political opportunity structures in which the movements under study have emerged and sustained themselves. Part of this analysis was included in Chapter 6, when the thesis discussed the structural characteristics of each movement in relation to their rates of adoption of and resistance to new hybrid media practices. It was found that the LGBTI+ movement has become more moderate politically and more institutionalised than the environmental movement, which hints at the opportunities they have enjoyed gaining resources and innovating in the adoption of hybrid media practices. But it also suggests that the environmental movement has faced some constraints. This thesis is not about political opportunity structures in specific, as it has borrowed insights from various perspectives on social movements at the same time, but certainly this is a clue that may be worth exploring in further research. More specifically, it could be followed on by social movement experts who focus more on the relationship between movements and power structures in the context of contentious action.

Secondly, another overlooked theme was related to differences across innovators. Although the study found two alternative innovation pathways, one more ideological and another more instrumental, the literature on activist

innovation has made important distinctions with respect to time, namely, between early- and late-adopters of new technologies (Karpf, 2010; Vromen, 2017), facilities (McAdam, 1995) and organisational repertoires (Clemens, 1993). Key authors focused on aspects of social movement diffusion have tended to conceptualise a progression line between ‘mimicking’ and innovation (Karpf, 2010; Vromen, 2017). However, as outlined in the previous section, one of the main contributions of this study was presenting innovation and emulation as separate and opposite behaviours by following the categorisation proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983). Thus, emulation as a concept seems to be a double-edged sword. At this stage it would be insightful to know whether emulators have tended to break their unreflecting patterns of adoption at some point and become conscious late-adopters of innovations. And even more insightful to understand why or under what conditions they have gained more awareness about the process of development of new media practices. The data analysed in this thesis were not enough to draw conclusions about this, meaning there could not suggest any other reason for SMOs to emulate than trying to be appropriate to their movement. The study was not focused on the path taken by SMOs to become innovators in their field either. But this theme is relevant and should definitively inform future examinations of SMOs and media practices innovation.

In light of the avenues for further research listed in this final section, it is possible to highlight once again the noteworthy contributions of this thesis to our current understanding of the relationship between social activism and the media. The thesis has shown with the case of Chilean SMOs’ media practices that today’s media ecology has become increasingly complex due to the accumulation and convergence of media technologies, content and routines of production and consumption of information. It thus seems that this hybrid media ecology does not know about borders between developed nations and middle-income democracies. How global is the process then? It would be necessary to study other contexts to have more precision in this respect, although in each new context the situation in which social movements have emerged, grown and had an influence on society and politics will have to be taken into account, because this varies and variation matters. In fact, variation is probably the main lesson of this study, which has provided an insightful conceptual toolkit to identify and

analyse differences among activist organisations and their organisational responses to socio-technological change, between their reasons to adopt new media practices and across the contexts where they have thrived and decayed. Equipped with this toolkit it would be possible to explore the process of media practice innovation, waves of emulation and resistance, and ultimately distinctions between similar yet different social movements across the world.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Sample information sheet for interviewees (in Spanish)

Interviewees were provided with the information sheet below prior to any recorded conversation.



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#### Hoja de Información a los Participantes

##### Título del Proyecto de Investigación

Movimientos sociales y sus prácticas mediales: Las comunicaciones offline y online de los activistas ambientalistas y LGBT+ en Chile

##### Investigador

David Jofré, Candidato a Doctor en Ciencias Políticas, Universidad de Glasgow

Tel: +56 9 92238832 / E-mail: [d.jofre-leiva.1@research.gla.ac.uk](mailto:d.jofre-leiva.1@research.gla.ac.uk)

Mediante el presente documento, le convoco para que participe en un proyecto de investigación a realizarse en Santiago. Antes de decidir su participación, es importante que usted entienda los motivos e implicaciones del estudio. Por favor tómese el tiempo necesario para leer cuidadosamente la Hoja de Información a los Participantes. Ante cualquier información que usted requiera aclarar, no dude en preguntarme. Gracias por leer este documento.

##### Objetivos del estudio

Esta investigación es parte de una tesis doctoral a ser presentada ante la Universidad de Glasgow, la cual indaga sobre la interrelación entre movimientos sociales y medios de comunicación mediante la observación del caso de los activistas ambientalistas y LGBT+ en Chile, y sus usos de diversos medios para defender y publicitar sus causas sociopolíticas. La investigación está diseñada para recopilar información de organizaciones de la sociedad civil sin fines de

lucro, comunidades locales o de base, y grupos online que se identifiquen como parte de un movimiento más amplio (ambientalista o LGBT+). Para obtener información de estos actores, efectuaré entrevistas semiestructuradas con los directivos, miembros o funcionarios que estén a cargo de diversas tareas comunicacionales y gestión de medios. Esto será complementado con el acceso a documentos públicos y disponibles generados por estas organizaciones, así como la observación no participante de sus interacciones sociales públicas.

#### **Naturaleza de su participación**

La experiencia de la organización que usted representa, como miembro de la sociedad civil comprometido con los esfuerzos colectivos por el cambio político y social en Chile, es de alta relevancia para este estudio. Le solicito participe en esta investigación como entrevistada/o porque me interesa conocer en detalle su experiencia e ideas acerca de los movimientos sociales y sus usos de diversos medios de comunicación. Su participación es completamente voluntaria y usted es libre de retirarse en cualquier momento y sin tener que dar ninguna explicación. Usted es también libre de finalmente retractarse de cualquier información proporcionada anteriormente. La entrevista durará aproximadamente 60 minutos y se enfocará en los esfuerzos activistas y procesos comunicativos que su asociación realiza a través de diversos medios. Usted podrá compartir su experiencia libremente. Si usted lo permite, la entrevista será grabada en audio, y posteriormente transcrita y guardada para su análisis en forma digital y protegida con password. No haré esta transcripción pública, destruyéndola diez años después de que la investigación haya concluido. Mi tesis será entregada a fines de Diciembre de 2018. Las grabaciones de audio originales de esta entrevista serán eliminadas inmediatamente después de esta entrega. Reuniones en persona son las más preferidas para efectuar esta entrevista; sin embargo, de resultar imposible, entonces la sesión puede efectuarse vía telefónica o electrónica (e-mail).

#### **Confidencialidad y anonimato**

Con su permiso, me gustaría poder citar información de esta entrevista en futuras publicaciones (por ejemplo, artículos académicos, libros y papers en conferencias). Su participación será confidencial y anónima para terceros, por lo

que no citaré directamente su nombre ni el de su organización sino que emplearé una etiqueta descriptiva genérica en la que se menciona su profesión o cargo y la causa que representa su grupo (por ejemplo, "Encargado/a de Comunicaciones de ONG ambientalista"). Usted debe saber que, a pesar del estricto protocolo recién descrito por mantener el anonimato de su participación, dado el pequeño universo de grupos de la sociedad civil en Chile, en algunos casos podría resultar imposible mantener total confidencialidad. Por ello, su nombre, información personal y datos de contacto serán completamente removidos de la transcripción de su entrevista. Guardaré la información que contiene su identidad en un lugar seguro. Otros investigadores podrían leer los datos recopilados durante el transcurso de esta investigación, pero ésta no mencionará nombres propios, restringiéndose al uso de las etiquetas descriptivas mencionadas anteriormente. La investigación se desarrolla con fines netamente académicos y ningún material aquí obtenido será utilizado para fines políticos o publicitarios. El proyecto ha sido evaluado y cuenta con la aprobación del Comité de Ética de Investigación del Departamento de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de Glasgow.

Agradezco su apoyo y tiempo para informarse sobre sus derechos al tomar parte en esta investigación. Se espera que los resultados de este estudio permitan una mejor comprensión del dinámico ambiente comunicativo en el que se mueve la sociedad civil, y que sean un aporte concreto para el impacto de las políticas comunicacionales de organizaciones como la suya. Quedo a su disposición ante cualquier inquietud.

#### **Información de contacto**

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*Para obtener más información, y en caso de cualquier queja o sugerencia, por favor contactarse con el Dr. Muir Houston, Ethics Officer, College of Social Sciences of the University of Glasgow, al siguiente e-mail: [Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk).*

## Appendix 2 - Sample consent form for interviewees (in Spanish)

Interviewees were provided with the consent form below prior to any recorded conversation.



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### Ficha de Consentimiento Informado

#### Título del Proyecto de Investigación

Movimientos sociales y sus prácticas mediales: Las comunicaciones offline y online de los activistas ambientalistas y LGBT+ en Chile

#### Investigador

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Tel: +56 9 92238832

**Supervisado por:** Dr Ana Langer y Dr Kelly Kollman, Universidad de Glasgow

1. Confirmando que he leído y entendido la Hoja de Información a los Participantes relacionada con el estudio descrito, y he tenido la oportunidad de formular mis preguntas y comentarios al respecto.
2. Comprendo que mi participación es completamente voluntaria, y que soy libre de retirarme en cualquier momento, sin tener que dar ninguna explicación. También comprendo que soy libre de retractarme de cualquier información proporcionada anteriormente.
3. Doy mi consentimiento para que el investigador (David Jofré, Candidato a Doctor en Ciencias Políticas) grabe el audio de esta entrevista y posteriormente haga una transcripción de éste. Comprendo que él no sería la

única persona en acceder y leer estas transcripciones puesto que, en ciertos casos, él podría compartirlas con sus supervisores, examinadores y otros investigadores competentes de la Universidad de Glasgow. Entiendo que mi nombre y datos personales no aparecerán mencionados en estas transcripciones, y que éstas serán destruidas 10 años después de que el proyecto haya concluido. Se estima que concluya a fines de Diciembre de 2018.

4. Estoy informado de que mi nombre y el de la organización que represento para fines de esta entrevista no serán directamente identificados en ninguna publicación derivada y que el investigador empleará una etiqueta descriptiva genérica para citar información de lo que conversemos en esta sesión (por ejemplo, "Encargado de Comunicaciones de ONG ambientalista". Estoy de acuerdo con que esta etiqueta se utilice para las transcripciones que sean compartidas con otros académicos de la Universidad de Glasgow. Comprendo además que, dado el limitado tamaño de este estudio, en ciertos casos podría ser difícil garantizar total confidencialidad a pesar de los protocolos recientemente descritos.

5. Conozco mi derecho a pedirle a David Jofré que no cite ciertos fragmentos de esta entrevista, ello pese a que yo no esté identificado como la fuente de dicha información.

Estoy de acuerdo en participar en esta investigación

No estoy de acuerdo en participar en esta investigación

Nombre de la/el participante ..... Firma ..... Fecha .....

Nombre del investigador ..... Firma ..... Fecha .....

### **Appendix 3 - Sample interview script (in English)**

Interviews were semi-structured and consequently the script below was not used as a questionnaire but rather for general guidance. The topics and questions listed in this document were flexibly applied depending on each interview. All questions were formulated in Spanish, but the script is presented here in English.

#### **Interview script**

#### **Representatives, members and activists of social movement groups**

##### **Theme 1 - Activism, communications and publicity**

Communication goals. Do you have clear and measurable communication aims; if yes, could you describe them? How do your communication efforts influence other segments of the movement you represent? Could you provide specific examples to illustrate this influence?

Publics and interactions. What actors are relevant for your PR efforts and in what ways do you communicate with them? Take the example of NGOs, grassroots communities, governmental agencies, private firms, professionals, etc. Do you have link with other actors and institutions at national and international level representing your activist cause?

Communication tasks. Briefly, could you explain me the processes by which decisions made within your group in order to organise campaigns (or activism) and communications (PR and publicity)?

Effects on the movement. How do your communication efforts influence other segments of the movement you represent? Could you provide specific examples to illustrate this influence?

##### **Theme 2 - Media practices and activist campaigning**

Campaigns and media. Can you tell me about your most recent, or most important campaigns? How did you communicate or made public them, to what

actors and why? Can you identify the media you used for campaigning, and how? Did the media play a relevant role?

Use and production of own media. Beyond these campaigns, what media outlets or platforms, if any, do you normally use in order to manage your different communication needs? Do you produce, publish or broadcast your own offline or online media? For example, magazines, blogs, brochures, etc. If yes, please describe them and explain the routines necessary to produce/distribute them.

Mainstream news media. Do you try to gain coverage in the mainstream news media such as newspapers and broadcasting? Which mainstream news media outlets in specific? What are the routines or how is it possible for you to influence in your media coverage?

Digital/online media. Does your organisation have a public/open website? If yes, what is the objective of this website? Does your organisation have a public/open profile or account on social media; for instance, Twitter, Facebook, Link, YouTube, etc.? If yes, can you describe the diverse objectives associated to the use of these tools? What other relevant digital or online media have you used for your work and why?

### **Theme 3 - Diversity and availability of different media**

Diversity of media practices. Of all the media that we have discussed thus far, are certain outlets preferred over others for your diverse communication needs, and why? Do you use them simultaneously? Can you describe particular experiences and led decisions in which you engage with more than one type of media at the same time, or others in which certain media were preferred over others? How is this work coordinated within your organisations overall?

Convergence and hybridity. Can you cope with the increasing amount of media possibilities? How do you adapt to the diversity of media available in your environment? Do you see opportunities to blend and converge diverse modes of communication, objectives and technologies? How and why do you seize these opportunities?

Effects on activist communication. What is the effect of the availability of more and diverse media to communicate with your target publics? Do you think your communication needs, operation and outcomes are changing because of this diversity of media practices? If so, could you provide examples to understand these effects and changes?

### **Comentarios finales y retroalimentación**

Additional information. Thank you for your time and for taking part in this interview. Is there any area you would like to expand or comment on? Please feel free to add information on any of the themes discussed during this interview.

Snowballing. Finally, my study encompasses a variety of groups related to this social movement in particular in which your organisation is embedded in. What other civil society organisations do you think are relevant for my study? Do you know any informal or loosely organised grassroots community, neighbourhood or union I should approach for my research? Any contact would be useful at this stage.

## Appendix 4 - List of interviewees

Interviewee	Place	Date	Recorded	Length
<b>Researchers and professionals (pilot interviewing)</b>				
Researcher 1: Associate Professor, School of Journalism, Universidad Diego Portales	Santiago centro	01/06/2016	Yes	00:56h
Researcher 2: Associate Professor, School of Communications and Journalism, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez	Via Skype	10/06/2016	Yes	00:24h
Researcher 3: Associate Professor, School of Communications, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	Santiago centro	01/07/2016	Yes	00:50h
Media professional 1: Former journalist and Account Manager (PR), Strategic Communication Consultancy Firm*	Las Condes, Santiago	25/05/2016	No	00:46h
Media professional 2: Account Manager (PR), Strategic Communication Consultancy Firm*	Las Condes, Santiago	25/05/2016	No	00:46h
<b>Environmental movement organisations</b>				
Participant 1a: Executive Director of NGO	Viña del mar, Valparaíso	12/07/2016	Yes	00:52h
Participant 2a: Spokesperson of federated grassroots group	Vicuña, Coquimbo	10/07/2016	Yes	00:22h
Participant 3a: President of NGO	San Vicente, O'Higgins	05/07/2016	Yes	01:03h
Participant 4a: Executive Director of NGO	Providencia, Santiago	09/06/2016	Yes	00:52h
Participant 5a: Executive Director of NGO and Member of transnational advocacy network**	La Reina, Santiago	08/06/2016	Yes	01:23h
Participant 6a: Head of Digital Communications of transnational advocacy network	Via Skype	14/07/2016	Yes	00:43h
Participant 7a: Head of Communications of environmental NGO	Ñuñoa, Santiago	13/07/2016	Yes	00:47h
Participant 8a: Coordinator of Membership Department of federated NGO*	Santiago centro	30/06/2016	Yes	00:35h
Participant 9a: Coordinator of Citizenship Department of federated NGO*	Santiago centro	30/06/2016	Yes	00:35h
Participant 10a: Marketing Officer of federated NGO*	Santiago centro	30/06/2016	Yes	00:35h
Participant 11a: Head of Communications of NGO and Former Head of Communications of another NGO**	Las Condes, Santiago	15/06/2016	Yes	01:08h

Participant 12a: Executive Director of NGO	Ñuñoa, Santiago	01/07/2016	Yes	01:04h
Participant 13a: Executive Director of federated NGO*	San Bernardo, Santiago	06/06/2016	Yes	01:20h
Participant 14a: President and Project Coordinator of federated NGO*	San Bernardo, Santiago	06/06/2016	Yes	01:20h
Participant 15a: Executive Director of NGO	Paihuano, Coquimbo	09/07/2016	Yes	01:12h
Participant 16a, Director of NGO	Santiago centro	15/06/2016	Yes	00:55h
Participant 17a: Executive Director of NGO	Santiago centro	Two sessions 15/07/2016 18/07/2016	Yes	02:16h (total)
Participant 18a: Director of grassroots group	Providencia, Santiago	22/06/2016	Yes	01:08h
Participant 19a: Spokesperson of grassroots group and Head of the Communications Committee of national advocacy network**	La Florida, Santiago	01/07/2016	Yes	01:09h
Participant 20a: Head of Metropolitan Branch of federated grassroots group and Second Spokesperson for the Central Zone of national advocacy network**	Santiago centro	03/07/2016	Yes	01:06h
Participant 21a: First spokesperson for the Central Zone of national advocacy network	Santiago centro	29/06/2016	Yes	00:54h
Participant 22a: Communications Coordinator of grassroots group	Las Condes, Santiago	22/06/2016	Yes	00:42h
Participant 23a: President of NGO	San José del Maipo, Santiago	26/07/2016	Yes	01:06h
Participant 24a: Researcher of NGO	Santiago centro	22/06/2016	Yes	01:14h
Participant 25a: Spokesperson of federated grassroots group and Manager of community radio*	Rancagua, O'Higgins	19/07/2016	Yes	01:16h
Participant 26a: Juridical Assistant of federated grassroots group *	Rancagua, O'Higgins	19/07/2016	Yes	01:16h
Participant 27a, Executive Director of NGO	Santiago centro	11/07/2016	Yes	01:18h
Participant 28a: Communications Strategist of NGO	Providencia, Santiago	28/06/2016	Yes	00:48h
<b>LGBTI+ movement organisations</b>				
Participant 1b: President of federated NGO and Political Coordinator of national advocacy network**	Santiago centro	15/05/2017	Yes	01:30h

Participant 2b: General Coordinator of NGO	Providencia, Santiago	18/05/2017	Yes	01:17h
Participant 3b: Gay activist, author and communication advisor of two NGOs**	Ñuñoa, Santiago	16/05/2017	Yes	01:13h
Participant 4b: Spokesperson of grassroots group	Santiago centro	26/05/2017	Yes	00:39h
Participant 5b: Director of activist media organisation	Viña del mar, Valparaíso	13/09/2016	Yes	00:52h
Participant 6b: Executive Director of federated NGO	Recoleta, Santiago	26/08/2016	Yes	01:07h
Participant 7b: Communications Officer of grassroots	Santiago centro	01/08/2016	Yes	00:54h
Participant 8b: Programme Advisor of NGO and Communication Officer of national movement network**	Santiago centro	27/07/2016	Yes	01:16h
Participant 9b: President and Director of Culture, Research and Communications of NGO	Santiago centro	Two sessions 12/05/2017 02/06/2017	Yes	01:25h (total)
Participant 10b: President of NGO	Santiago centro	25/05/2017	Yes	00:57h
Participant 11b: Administration Manager of NGO*	Recoleta, Santiago	17/08/2016	Yes	01:09h
Participant 12b: Communications Officer of NGO*	Recoleta, Santiago	18/08/2016	Yes	00:35h
Participant 13b: Founder Member of grassroots group and Founder Member of national advocacy network**	Ñuñoa, Santiago	25/07/2016	Yes	00:58h
Participant 14b: Executive Director of NGO and Spokesperson of national advocacy network**	Ñuñoa, Santiago	17/08/2016	Yes	01:29h
Participant 15b: Founder Member and Researcher of grassroots group	Santiago centro	24/05/2017	Yes	01:26h

\* The interview session with this respondent was relevant for more than one SMO.

\*\* The interview was conducted with more than one respondent in the same setting, and therefore this session is listed more than once in order to count the total of respondents that participated in the research.

## Appendix 5 - List of SMO documentation selected for analysis

The list above counts all the sources of text, both print and online, that were included in the analysis of this thesis, according to each cluster of movement organisations.

Type of document	Environmental SMOs	LGBTI+ SMOs
Annual and finances reports	9	7
Online books, brochures and leaflets	5	2
Print publications (brochures, leaflets pamphlets and magazines)	7	3
Official SMO websites	14	14
Weblogs	5	3
Facebook profiles (including a month of posts, 1-30 Sep 2017)	22	14
Twitter profiles (including a month of posts, 1-30 Sep 2017)	17	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>57</b>

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