

The impact of Social Networks on political movements and the Polarization

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of social media on politics in order to understand the structure of polarization in digital political discourse. To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach was established, involving the processing of metadata using R Studio and its Bibliometrix library, along with an analytical review of context-specific scholarly references. The results indicate that the emotionalization of discourse is a tactic used to produce political polarization on social media. As an example, the co-occurrence network analysis reveals that terms such as “emotion” are closely linked to “social media” and “polarization,” which suggests a communication strategy based on eliciting immediate emotional reactions rather than rational arguments. Some authors confirm this trend by showing how, in the Dutch Parliament, digital interactions reinforce not only ideological divisions, but also divisions based on gender, age, and

ethnicity.

Keywords: Political Polarization, Ethics, Governance, Social Media.

1. Introduction

To understand the impact of Social Networks on the political Polarization that can be unleashed in their use, a conceptual sketch must first be made to recognize the primary terms, such as the term Polarization, although the Royal Spanish Academy describes it as the action and effect of polarizing or polarizing, its definition is not deepened. it remains open, blurred, diffuse; however, this term was chosen in 2023 as one of the words of the year, where the RAE makes a slightly more in-depth description, see below:

This word, which has been included in the dictionary since 1884, prevailed over 11 eleven words, which were: amnesty, ecosilence, Euribor, FANI, fediverse, fentanyl, war, humanitarian, macrofire, earthquake and ultrafalse. The term Polarization is used "to allude to situations in which there are two very defined and distant opinions or activities (in reference to the poles), sometimes with the implicit ideas of tension and confrontation," said FundéuRAE, a foundation promoted by the Royal Spanish Academy and the EFE Agency (Díaz, 2023).

Up to this point, with this definition nuanced by the newspaper La Republica, citing the RAE in 2023, it is understood that Polarization is a term that takes shape in the distancing of public opinions, makes the ideological opinions of create a kind of force that is expressed in the encounter of dialogue and the construction of society; It is a situation that fragments culture, fragments society, and has also become a tool of conscious use for some political parties and political leaders recognized worldwide.

The next concept that must be understood is the "traditional media", by which it is understood that they were the communication or dissemination channels that had a social presence before the digital era and that guaranteed a large-scale transmission of information, among these are categorized the written press, television, radio and print advertising. The last concept that must be clarified is Social Network or Social Networks, according to the RAE a Social Network is:

Information society service that offers users a communication platform through the internet so that they can generate a profile with their personal data, facilitating the creation of communities based on common criteria and allowing the communication of their users, so that they can interact through messages, share information, etc. images or videos, allowing these publications to be immediately accessible by all users in their group (Real Academia Española, 2023).

According to Forbes (2023) 4,760 million people use Social Networks worldwide, almost all (94.9%) of the 5,160 million Internet users that exist and almost 60% (59.4%) of the world's population. I understand the magnitude of these figures, it is a necessity to try to understand what impact Social Networks have on politics and Polarization? And based on this research question, an objective for the study is proposed, which in this case is to analyze the impact of Social Networks on politics, in order to understand the structure of Polarization in digital political discourses.

However, the analysis depends on the systematic review of authors and their works located in the Scopus and Web of Science databases, this analysis is based on the creation of a documentary analysis matrix where the following information of each document is stored:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Font Type | • Research Problem |
| • Title of the document | • Summary |
| • Authors | • Main results |
| • Citation: APA (7th EDITION) | • Discussion |
| • Reference: APA (7th EDITION) | • Conclusions |
| • Keywords | • Reading Synthesis |
| • General objective | |

This matrix allows researchers to discover patterns, trends, geopolitical positions, among others, in line with Chacón et al. (2013) this type of matrix allows to socialize the design and application of a document

review and analysis (RAD) methodology for the state of the art, in addition to strengthening the analyses dependent on the elimination of research bias.

Among the prominent authors is Robles et al. (2022) with their work *When negativity is fuel. Bots and Political Polarization in the COVID-19 Debate*, in this research it is proposed that there are "bot farms" that affect the polarization of political discourse during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused negativism in political debates, political tensions, ideological; at the same time, it talks about the impact of these automated messages on the increase of critical bias and the increase of a catastrophic and polarized perception in the face of the actions of governments for the management of the pandemic.

Another work considered relevant is that of M. Mendoza (2022), as here the destructive purpose of a polarized political message against the image of another political representative and his discourse becomes evident, even generating terrorist possibilities as mentioned by the author in his work *The Political Use of Terrorism in the Peruvian Presidential Campaign of 2021*; from this perspective, there is talk of reinforcement of fear, as populist and political instrumentalization, alignment with specific political campaigns such as Fujimorism in Peru or criminalization and consolidation of social class and nationalism prejudices.

With another well-founded look as a research background, Harel (2024) finds his work *Frozen discourse: how screenshots hinder depolarization on social media*, since here an analysis of political messages oriented to a polarizing cause published on Meta platforms, more precisely on Facebook and X formerly called Twitter, was carried out, where it is evident that these messages produce a kind of static reality, that does not allow the evolution of a discourse or dialogue between ways communities and in particular reaching the distancing of unity.

Muñoz et al. (2024) in the research *Quantifying polarization in online political discourse*, tries to create a mechanism that measures the Polarization of Social Networks in the Spanish elections from 2011 to 2029, through the use of the SPIN algorithm, in the study it is concluded that political popularization increases after each election cycle and as an aggregate the social network X had a great influence on political discourses.

In total there are 47 studies that were analyzed, at a global level, in order to understand the impact of Social Networks on politics and Polarization, adding to this literary analysis, R Studio and its Bibliometrix Library were used to carry out a slightly deeper analysis from the metadata proposed by Scopus and Web of Science, this software is chosen because it is open source and its potential to provide graphs ready for interpretation, as expressed by Perdigón Llanes & Pérez Pino (2022) in their research *Open source tools for statistical analysis in scientific research*.

2. Methodology

Eligibility criteria: the scientific literature used as a basis for this review had several stages for eligibility, having built the specialized search equation, a timeline from 2020 to 2025 was determined, with documents only with the title of scientific article, after proceeding to read abstracts, keywords, titles, with the ideal of finding connectivity with the subject of study, these initial aspects are taken as primary metadata; In a second stage, the complete reading of the documents linked to the study is carried out, in order to verify their veracity with the subject of study, eliminating duplicate documents, which were not open access or could not fully access their content.

Sources of information: the databases chosen for this study are Scopus and Web of Science, hosted by wide thematic coverage, as well as by their wide portfolio of indexed academic journals, another important aspect is that both databases present a section to analyze the results, which is important for the study. The use of these databases is therefore essential to search, find and consult the most significant scientific publications in the different areas of knowledge (Escoda, 2017).

Search strategy: for both databases, specialized search equations were constructed, which shared the same keywords, in order to maintain the research focus, the direction of what you want to find.

Para la base de datos Scopus se diseñó la siguiente ecuación de búsqueda: TITLE-ABS-KEY(("social media" OR "online platform*" OR "digital platform*" OR "X" OR "Twitter") AND ("political communication" OR "government communication" OR "governance" OR "public policy communication" OR "political discourse") AND ("polariz*" OR "partisan*" OR "political division" OR "extremis*" OR "sociopolitical tension")) AND DOCTYPE(ar) AND PUBYEAR > 2015.

Para la base de datos Web of Science se diseñó la siguiente ecuación: TS=((social media OR online platform* OR digital platform* OR twitter OR x) AND (polariz* OR partisan* OR political division OR extremis* OR sociopolitical tension) AND (political communication OR government communication OR governance OR public policy communication OR political discourse)) AND PY=2015-2025 AND DT=("article").

Data management: the management of metadata was initially carried out in the implementation of a document analysis matrix, where literary references were stored, categorized and ordered in the area of the study, this matrix was built in a Microsoft Excel file. On the other hand, the metadata exported from both databases were processed in Bibliometrix, a library of the R Studio software, which was chosen for being open source, in addition to the intuitive way of presenting the reading of the data, delivering them ready for interpretation and publication. This software is also chosen for its benefits and aspects described in the construction of a systematic review, addressed by Aria and Cuccurullo (2017) in their work *Bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis*.

Selection process: the selection process was carried out according to the parameters of the PRISMA 2020 methodology, in four stages of analysis and review of the documents, these stages are:

1. Identification
2. Check-up
3. Suitability
4. Inclusion

The process is detailed in depth in Figure 1, it is worth mentioning that during this process the elements mentioned above in the section on eligibility criteria were carried out, which give an account of how the process of linking and excluding them was theoretical. See Figure 1 below:

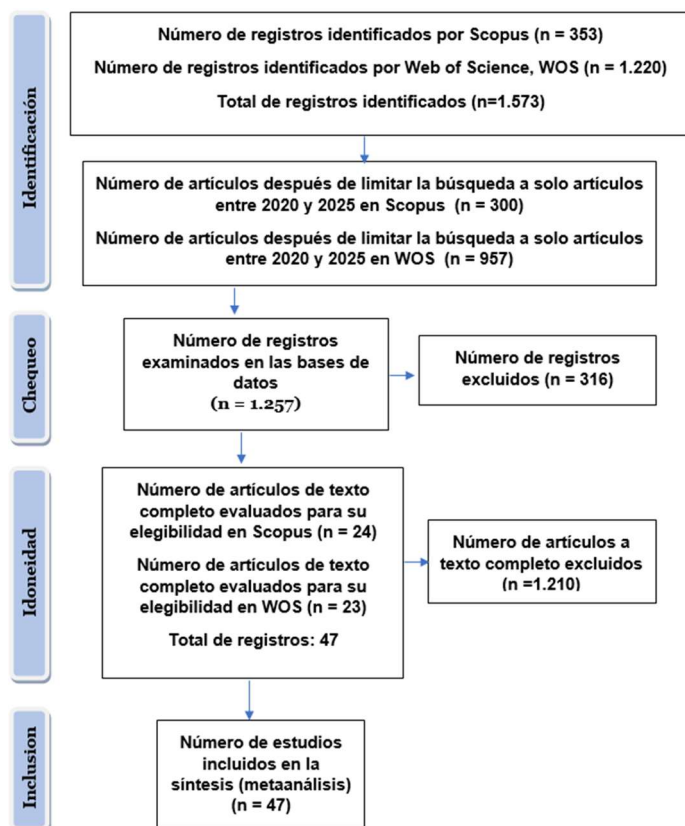


Figure 1.

PRISMA flowchart. Own elaboration

Data collection process: the data results of the search are stored and categorized in the document analysis matrix, created in a Microsoft Excel file, here it is possible to perform a bibliometric analysis of the chosen works, it is allowed to store the research problem, the objective of the study, the main results, fragments of the discussion, main conclusions, to build the citation section, on this occasion according to the APA 7 edition standards, among other aspects considered relevant. These elements are justified in the work of Moilanen et al. (2022), when they mention the need to constitute a documentary matrix that allows extracting and analyzing the information intended to be studied in the constructions of systematic reviews.

Data elements: according to the data stored in the document analysis matrix, made in Microsoft Excel, were added manually by the researchers, at the time of performing the complete reading of the studies, on the other hand, in the extraction of the metadata located in the Scopus and WOS databases, the information was downloaded in CSV files for Scopus and for WOS in a file called EndNote Desktop.

Assessment of the risk of bias of the study: a possible source of bias in the study is the non-involvement of other sources of information, this may have compromised the results in length and diversity, however the treatment given to the information in the documentary analysis matrix, facilitates the closure of the berra in this sense, since the document is analyzed and approved by experts and researchers.

Measures of effect: the measure of effect for this study is the combination of bibliometric and qualitative indicators in order to evaluate the intensity, centrality and recurrence of the phenomenon of political polarization in social networks. From the perspective of the quantitative approach, tools from the R Studio software and its Bibliometrix library were used in order to calculate metrics such as the frequency of key terms, the centrality of intermediation, closure and PageRank within the main thematic cluster, as well as

the semantic co-occurrence index, which allowed mapping the influence of concepts such as "*Polarization*", "*communication*", "*emotion*" and "*X*" (formerly Twitter).

From the qualitative approach, an interpretative measure was applied based on the analysis of the discourse of the studies reviewed, where the degree of emotional instrumentalization, the level of democratic affectation and the potential for viralization of polarizing messages are evaluated. These sections guarantee us a measure of multidimensional effect where it is possible to understand not only the frequency of the phenomenon, but also its structural depth, its socio-political impact and its ability to be replicated in digital contexts.

Synthesis methods: the most relevant results are in the form of figures, tables, easy to understand, which do not need other content for their interpretation, however a descriptive and interpretative section is attached to each of them, in order to complete their functionality; the graphs were obtained by processing the metadata in the R Studio software.

Evaluation of reporting bias: it is declared that the results of the study were not manipulated or altered to benefit any ideological thought or any other interest, transparency is revealed regardless of whether the results are categorized as negative or positive. All the studies analyzed are part of sources of information accepted by experts as valid and of quality, no unpublished studies were incorporated, and the meta-analysis provides a decrease in the bias of the results.

Certainty assessment: a high value has been chosen in the certainty rating, it is justified in the literature analyzed, the great impact that Social Networks have on politics and Polarization is evidenced; this certainty is evaluated according to the GRADE methodology (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation), this methodology arises as a response to multiple systems of classification of evidence and offers a transparent and transparent process. structured to develop and present evidence summaries. The main domains that were used to assess certainty in this case were the analysis of risk of bias, verification of indirect clairvoyance, as well as the evaluation of reporting bias, finally the tables contained in the findings synthesize the process in a simplified and controlled way. This is in line with the work of Kirmayr et al. (2021).

3. Results

Font Type	Citation: APA (7th EDITION)	Keywords	General objective
WOS	(Afonso et al., 2024)	Machine learning Predictive modeling Topic analysis Political communication Social media political marketing Twitter	The overall objective (Senate election results national) of tweets po
WOS	(González & Pérez-Curiel, 2021)	Disinformation – Twitter – COVID-19 – Populism – Leader – Influence – Social Audience	To know which bra produce in the public
WOS	(D. O. Pérez & Hernández, 2022)	Journalistic culture; Media system; Cuba; Journalistic autonomy; Journalistic roles; Instrumentalization of the media; Media functions; Media policy; Public service.	The study seeks to d media system that presidency of Raúl journalistic culture ar

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WOS	(Robles et al., 2022)	COVID-19, political bots, political polarization, digital propaganda, public opinion, social media analysis.	This study seeks to analyze the impact of automated content generated on social networks on public opinion. It examines these automated agents, which are managed by the government, using "Data Analysis" techniques. The study concludes that these agents have contributed to the radicalization and polarization of public opinion.
WOS	(L. S. Trujillo et al., 2021)	Social movements; flamenco; social networks; performance; female body.	The article explores the role of social networks in the dissemination of flamenco, a traditional Spanish dance, and its impact on the female body. It analyzes the performance of flamenco on the Flo6x8 platform from the perspective of social networks, with the goal of understanding the viral actions in the digital space. The study is based on the Women's Day (2018) event.
WOS	(Lukacovic, 2020)	COVID-19, Securitization, Media, Propaganda, Disinformation, Pandemic, Europe, Public Policy.	The study aims to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on public perception and decision-making. It examines the role of media, propaganda, and disinformation in the context of the pandemic. The study highlights the impact of these factors on public perception and decision-making.
WOS	(López-Rabadán & Doménech-Fabregat, 2021)	Political communication; Elections; Leadership; Social media; Instagram; Video; Spectacularization; Customization; Mobilization; Political attack; Populism; Polarization; Extreme right; Vox.	The article analyzes the role of social media in the consolidation of the populist discourse in Spain. It examines the use of platforms like Instagram and YouTube for political communication, highlighting the role of video and customization. The study also discusses the impact of mobilization, political attack, populism, polarization, and the extreme right on the political landscape, with a focus on Vox.
WOS	(Fernández, 2021)	political speech, Twitter, Vox, immigration, social networks, hoaxes, racism, hate speech, critical analysis of speech.	To analyse the discourse of political speech on adult migrants and social networks, the study uses a critical analysis of speech. It examines the role of hoaxes, racism, and hate speech in the context of immigration. The study also discusses the impact of these factors on the political landscape, with a focus on Vox and Twitter.
WOS	(Zafrilla, 2021)	artificial polarization, perceived polarization, group polarization, moral exhibitionism.	The study seeks to understand the role of the internet in the polarization of public opinion. It examines the impact of artificial polarization, perceived polarization, group polarization, and moral exhibitionism on the political landscape. The study also discusses the role of the internet in the dissemination of incendiary speeches and the impact of these factors on public opinion.

WOS	(Mila-Maldonado et al., 2022)	COVID-19 pandemic, political agenda, populism, Twitter, Nayib Bukele, polarization.	The article analyzes the role of Nayib Bukele, for the dissemination of COVID-19 pandemic information, to build his political power and create a dichotomy within the population.
WOS	(M. Mendoza, 2022)	Peru, terrorism, presidential campaign, criminalization, bicentennial, internal armed conflict, internal enemy, terror.	The article examines the role of social media in the presidential campaign, focusing on the use of social media by a leftist candidate. The article also analyzes the dissemination of messages by the government of Keiko Fujimori, and the role of an internal enemy to stoke the fear of terrorism.
WOS	(Plazas-Olmedo & López-Rabadán, 2022)	Political communication, electoral video, social networks, spectacularization, multiplatform, elections.	The article examines the role of audiovisual communication in the 2019 general elections in Peru, focusing on the use of social networks from a multiplatform perspective. The article also analyzes the role of Facebook and YouTube in the dissemination of new formats and narratives.
WOS	(Tule & Echavarría, 2020)	Presidential campaigns, professionalization, political communication, electoral strategies, Mexico, political marketing, social networks.	The study seeks to analyze the role of social media in presidential campaigns in Mexico, focusing on the professionalization of political communication and the use of electoral strategies. The article also analyzes the role of social networks in the dissemination of political marketing and the use of innovative elements of communication.
WOS	(Sierra & Rodríguez-Virgili, 2019)	Social media, political communication, research, scientific journals	The article provides a review of the role of social media in political communication, focusing on the use of social media in research and scientific journals. The article also analyzes the role of social media in the dissemination of political communication and the use of innovative elements of communication.
WOS	(Uribe et al., 2023)	Twitter, democracy, political communication, Open State.	This article analyzes the role of Twitter in the dissemination of political communication, focusing on the use of Twitter in the context of democracy and the Open State. The article also analyzes the role of Twitter in the dissemination of political communication and the use of innovative elements of communication.
WOS	(Dai et al., 2023)	Political communication, social networks, digital public sphere, social network analysis, semantic analysis, COVID-19, polarization, public opinion.	The study investigates the role of social networks in the dissemination of political communication, focusing on the use of social networks in the context of the digital public sphere, social network analysis, semantic analysis, COVID-19, polarization, and public opinion. The article also analyzes the role of social networks in the dissemination of political communication and the use of innovative elements of communication.

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			relationship between evaluating the role of
WOS	(Wassie et al., 2024)	Political communication, ethnic identity, digital sphere, discourse analysis, political ideology, social networks.	The study examines discursive practices in the recent political re way in which political identity formation fragmentation of the government, the form (PP) and the electoral
WOS	(Tolsma & Spierings, 2024)	Twitter, parliament, polarization, social networks, political segregation, digital communication, mentions, retweets.	The article investigate segregation among m of its digital interact followers, mentions (digital connections demographic division
WOS	(Guo & Hu, 2023)	Polarization of opinions, news elaboration, engagement with news, interpersonal political discussion, communicative mediation model, Chinese public sphere.	The study looks at ho China, specifically in communicative medi media users, the rese and its impact on the
WOS	(DePaula, 2022)	Information provision Government communication Political ideologySocial media Information policy ICTs	The objective of the t strategy aimed at hig matters under the Environmental Prot emphasis on econom
WOS	(Barrios-Rubio, 2024)	Government, social network X, polarization, communication, influence	The study analyzes P in Colombia, focusing interaction with citi management of his in in the messages and ideological affiliation
WOS	(García et al., 2023)	Social networks, political communication, personal branding, Instagram, Castilla y León, strategic communication management, electoral campaign, political parties.	The study examines communication durin Castilla y León in 20 with the highest num the construction of th discourse. Through t January 28 and Febr audiovisual formats a

WOS	(López-Ponce et al., 2025)	Election campaign, political communication, COVID-19, presidential elections, X (Twitter), polarization.	The study analyzes the political communication of Duque and Gustavo Petro during the 2018 elections and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The study analyzes 9,395 tweets and 311 posts, which were examined to determine the level of polarization in their social media.
WOS	(Romancini et al., 2024)	Political communication, literary humor, identity, social networks, elections.	The study analyzes the political communication of the politician Guilherme Boulos on social media. It seeks to understand the construction of his political identity and the relationship with his followers. The research is based on a corpus of humorous elements.

When performing metadata management in the R Studio software and its Bibliometrix library, the results show Figure 2, a plus keyword cloud, as determined by the platform, where the term “*Polarization*” it has significant relevance, but it does not have the leading role of the whole, its presence indicates a relationship with the other terms, which can be inferred as part of a system that flows to give life to a phenomenon. In line with M. Mendoza (2022) we account for the almost symbiotic relationship between political polarization and Social Network X, in addition to the fact that the name of this platform is exposed in the word cloud as the most influential, in the theoretical refracts of the study it is evident that this is the case, it could be said that many of the leaders of various geopolitical contexts use it as a tool to propagate political communiqués, opinions, including making new proposals known or giving an order to an agency of the same government; the author mentioned in this paragraph speaks to us of the instrumentalization of a rather strong, shocking, destabilizing concept, he speaks of “terrorism” in Peruvian politics, revealing how “terrorismo” has been reused for the delegitimization of Pedro Castillo in the 2021 presidential campaign. But here something interesting is that the analysis of the political discourse to reach this direction was done through a certain number of publications on the social network X, it is important to emphasize the importance of understanding that these discourses are long-term reading, they are not going to disappear from the internet, they are going to continue to be in contact with users and the impact of criminalization on social movements must be considered. progressive policies.

However, the strong concepts in Figure 2 are “*social media and communication*” that give part of the semantic root of the study, it could be said that they are the root of the discussion that takes place on the impact caused through these technological channels of today to disseminate massive, global information; it is these two words that cause the greatest vibration over the other terms because it is through them that they are used to communicate with the media. Other terms come to life in this phenomenon, such as *populism*, the so-called *fake news* or the new way of doing *democracy* in contemporary times.



Figure 2.

Word cloud, obtained from Bibliometrix

At the same time, it was necessary to look for a slightly more evident relationship between the terms exposed in the metadata and this led us to seek a holistic interpretation of them from figure 3, which is cataloged as a network of co-occurrences, in which it is easier to observe how the concept of *Polarization* has special affinity and closeness to the term *Social Network*. which in turn is related to the concept of *emotions*, from here there can already be an interpretation that speaks of a strategic way of playing with an audience, of communicating, manipulating a digital group or community through emotions, it tells us about the way of doing digital politics in the middle of 2025, where the representative no longer has the need to go to a specific place to campaign, now you can do it from the comfort of your office, what's more, you don't have to type, you just have to order the Social Media assistant what to say. In this sense, it is necessary to bring a note to the authors Tolsma & Spierings (2024) and their work "*Twitter and divides in the Dutch parliament: social and political segregation in the following, @-mentions and retweets networks*", because here the aforementioned is justified, they give us an account of the political, social phenomenon that is experienced in the Dutch parliament and that is that through replications of messages (retweets), in social network X, political segregation is reinforced, partisan and demographic divisions are created such as age, gender and ethnicity, among other words *Political Polarization is created*.

In another approach, it is notable how *public opinion* is related to *attitudes*, to *policies*, to the term *online* and this in turn to the term *perceptions* and *campaign*, realizing that the greatest transcendence of political messages aimed at creating Polarization in Social Networks is in times of campaigns, in political elections, it is understood that political polarization is not an act that occurs as the end of a consequence, it is a previously planned tool, it becomes an administrative strategy of political representatives to weaken the discourse of other parties and divide public opinion, but that by carrying out this division the majority of a group of people remain on the side where the mirage of saving discourse provided by the party in charge is created to carry out the polarizing strategy.

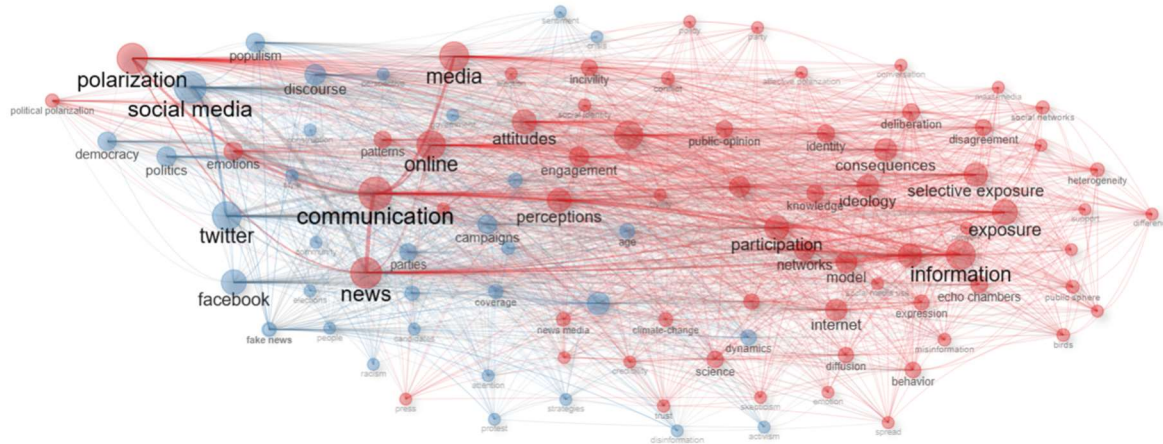


Figure 3.

Network of co-occurrences, obtained from Bibliometrix

From a numerical analytical perspective, the term *communication* presents the highest value of occurrences, with a value of 248, it also presents an intermediation centrality of 5.225, a closure centrality of 0.004 and a PageRank centrality of 0.067 between the different nodes, with these metrics it occupies the first place in the cluster; on the other hand, the term Polarization presents a numbering of occurrences of 137, an intermediation centrality of 12.105, a closing centrality of 0.005 and a PageRank centrality of 0.038, occupying the fourth place in the cluster, for a better understanding of these values Table 1 is used below, with the first 10 places in the communication cluster:

Table 1.

Position of the top ten terms within the main cluster, obtained from Bibliometrix

Occurrences	Words	Group	Cluster tag	Centrality of intermediation	Closing centrality	Centrality of PageRank
248	Communication	1	Communication	5.225	0.004	0.067
159	News	1	Communication	21.287	0.005	0.045
139	Media	1	Communication	16.012	0.005	0.030
137	Polarization	1	Communication	12.105	0.005	0.038
98	Online	1	Communication	37.453	0.006	0.029
84	Information	1	Communication	48.478	0.006	0.028
82	Exhibition	1	Communication	25.381	0.005	0.027
57	Impact	1	Communication	96.496	0.006	0.017
56	Selective exposure	1	Communication	38.167	0.006	0.020
55	Opinion	1	Communication	31.120	0.006	0.019

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As a relevant point of the results, it is important to describe, as a bibliometric analysis, which are the research (works) that have had the greatest impact in terms of scientific production according to the topic of study between Social Networks, politics and Polarization. This position is proposed in Table 2, and it is also considered that these investigations not only represent theoretical and methodological milestones, but are also starting points to understand how digital dynamics are reconfiguring political participation and social cohesion.

Firstly, the work of Barberá et al. (2015) entitled *"Tweeting from Left to Right: Is Online Political Communication More Than an Echo Chamber?"* stands out. published in *Psychological Science*. This article is positioned as the most cited of the group analyzed, which reflects its importance in the debate on the existence of echo chambers on Twitter, today known as X. His quantitative approach and his analysis of patterns of cross-interaction between users of different ideological orientations have set precedents in multiple subsequent studies on affective polarization and political communication in the digital age.

It is followed, in second place of relevance, according to the metadata analyzed in Bibliometrix, by the study by Kim (2015) in *Mass Communication and Society*, *"Does Disagreement Mitigate Polarization? How Selective Exposure and Disagreement Affect Political Polarization"*. This paper addresses a variable that is considered a key question, which talks about whether exposure to contrary opinions reduces or intensifies Polarization, in addition, although its number of citations is lower, its contribution lies in proposing a model from the causality between disagreement and ideological deepening, which has been taken up in research reference for this study on the effects of political deliberation in digital environments.

Another significant article is that of Bode et al. (2015), *"Candidate Networks, Citizen Groups, and Political Expression: Strategic Use of Hashtags in the 2010 Midterm Elections"* published in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. This study examines the strategic use of hashtags in electoral campaigns, highlighting how microblogging tools become spaces for political mobilization and agenda building, so their relevance is established in having been one of the first to link digital network structures with communication strategies in electoral contexts.

Also worthy of mention is the work of Hart et al. (2015) in *Science Communication*, *"Extending the Impacts of Hostile Media Perceptions: Influences on Discussion and Opinion Polarization in the Context of Climate Change"*. This article explores how hostile perceptions towards the media influence public discussion and polarization around complex issues such as climate change, and its focus on a cross-cutting and global issue gives it broad validity, which may explain its recurrent presence in the literature on environmental communication and media bias.

The article by Hahn et al. (2015) in *Mass Communication and Society*, *"Fragmentation in Media Following on Twitter: Representing Ideological and Generational Division Among South Korean Users"*, brings an international perspective to the analysis of information fragmentation, because by focusing on South Korean users, this study illustrates how cultural and historical factors interact with the dynamics of information consumption on Social Networks. which broadens the geographical framework of analysis usually dominated by Western contexts.

On the side of the work of Suhay et al. (2014) in *American Politics Research*, *"Forging Bonds and Burning Bridges: Polarization and Incivility in Occupy Wall Street Blogs"*, offers a qualitative look at political incivility in digital spaces. Although with fewer citations, his analysis of the discourse in blogs associated with the Occupy Wall Street movement is valuable in understanding how Polarization not only manifests itself in ideas, but also in forms of interaction and language.

However, the study by Nisbet & Markowitz (2015) in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *"Experience in an Age of Polarization: Assessing Political Awareness and Communication Behaviors of Scientists"*, talks about the role of experts and scientists in polarized contexts, raises a critique of how technical specialization can be affected by the dynamics of divided public opinion, especially on issues such as climate or public health.

For their part, Hoffman et al. (2015) propose a different approach in *the International Journal of Communication*, based on their study entitled: *"Diversity by Choice: Applying a Social Cognitive Perspective to the Role of Public Service Media in the Digital Era"*. Although it is not assigned a DOI code in this database, its number of citations positions it among the most relevant studies; The article explores how public media can intervene to combat so-called ideological fragmentation and promote pluralism from the information perspective, which could offer an institutional alternative to the commercial algorithms of private platforms.

The work of Borah et al. (2015) in the journal *Information Technology & Politics*, entitled: *"Causes and Consequences of Selective Exposure Among Political Blog Readers: The Role of Hostile Media Perception in Motivated Media Use and Expressive Participation"*, discusses the issue of selective exposure, from the perspective of political blogging, which could help to understand how certain types of audiences use digital media not only to be informed, but also to express political identity and participate symbolically.

And finally, the article by Horwitz and Nir (2014) in the journal *International Political Science Review*, entitled: *"How Political-News Parallelism Strengthens the Power of Partisanship"*, addresses the relationship between news coverage and party affiliation, the study presents a low number of citations, which is seen as a contrast to their research question, how does the media reinforce or weaken political partisanship? This also raises a critique of the role of the media in polarized democracies. See Table 2 below:

Table 2.

Ten most relevant works according to Bibliometrix, obtained from Bibliometrix

DOI	Authors	Title	Source	Year	Quote Total
10.1177/0956797615594620	Barberá p; Jost jt; Nagler j; Tucker JA; Bonneau R	Tweeting from left to right: Is online political communication more than just an echo chamber?	Psychologica l Science	2015	932
10.1177/1077699015596328	Kim Y	Does Disagreement Mitigate Polarization? How does selective exposure and disagreement affect political polarization?	Journalism and Mass Communicat ion Quarterly	2015	75
10.1177/0002716214563923	Bode L; Hannah A; Yang J; Shah Dv	Candidate Networks, Citizen Groups, and Political Expression: Strategic Use of Hashtags in the 2010 By-Elections	Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences	2015	60

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10.1177/1075547015592067	Hart Ps; Feldman L; Leiserowitz A; Maibach E	Amplifying the Impacts of Hostile Media Perceptions: Influences on Discussion and Polarization of Opinion in the Context of Climate Change	Scientific communication	2015	36
10.1177/1077699014559499	Hahn Ks; Ryu S; Park S	Fragmentation in media following on Twitter: the representation of the ideological and generational divide of South Korean users	Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly	2015	27
10.1177/1532673X14553834	Suhay E; Blackwell A; Roche C; Bruggeman L	Forging Bonds and Burning Bridges: Polarization and Incivility in Blog Discussions of Occupy Wall Street	U.S. Political Research	2014	23
10.1177/0002716214559699	Nisbet Mc; Markowitz Em	Experience in an Era of Polarization: Assessing Scientists' Political Awareness and Communication Behaviors	Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences	2015	22
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275658951_Diversity_by_Choice_Appling_a_Social_Cognitive_Perspective_to_the_Role_of_Public_Service_Media_in_the_Digital_Age	Hoffman Cp; Lutz C; Meckel M; Ranzini G	Diversity by choice: applying a social cognitive perspective to the role of public service media in the digital age	International Journal of Communication	2015	19
10.1080/19331681.2015.1008608	Borah P; Thorson K; Hwang H	Causes and Consequences of Selective Exposure Among Political Blog Readers: The Role of Hostile Media Perception in Motivated Media Use and Expressive Participation	Journal of Information Technology and Politics	2015	18

10.1177/0192512113516900	Horwitz Sn; Nir L	How News Strengthens Strength Partisanship	Political- Parallelism the of	International Journal Political Science	2014	12
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Figure 4 shows the classification of the authors by categories that define political polarization, that is, there are three components that define it, in this case those components are: *affective polarization, ideological fragmentation and global dynamics*; in the case of affective polarization, it refers to the play with emotions on social groups to carry out political candidacy and that according to Martínez and Diez (2024) this phenomenon affects a little more young people, in addition, this mention can be given because it is young people who use Social Networks the most to interact with the digital world and their digital communities, where Instagram, for example, from its visual configuration, presents itself to be an attraction with many interactions, as we can see in the research of García et al. (2023).

On the side of ideological fragmentation, what political polarization seeks is to weaken democracy by making population groups smaller from their collective thinking, because it is in this way that they are so strong for us, so to speak, when it comes to holding a political election as a minority, any social group would not have the strength to obtain voters for a certain political party. Governance through current digital platforms has become a strategy for rulers to reach more people, but at the same time the responsibility grows exponentially, with more contacts there are other possibilities that are not so positive for a political party such as fragmenting groups from their ideology to win voters, for example; in the research by Wang et al. (2024) tells us about the study of more than 90,000 tweets, the scope of these figures is exorbitant and although it seems limited the interaction of users on platforms such as X the lance is functional for this ideological fragmentation to happen.

The role of global dynamics in political polarization is crucial, it gives context to the concept, because one of the benefits of digital media is the greater reach they have compared to traditional media, by having a greater reach of political messages, the dynamic tends to globalize in seconds, an example of this are the strategic tweets used by U.S. President Donald Trump, to make effective an order on another nation with his "tariff war", these communiqués multiply easily and a communicative dynamic was generated from this, the message was replicated, transformed, commented on and opined. This type of globalized positions can be seen in a wide variety of studies such as Harel's (2024), which analyzes screenshots, replications of messages, daily comments by political representatives with polarizing discourses, focused on weakening the democratic position of their peers. See Figure 4 below:

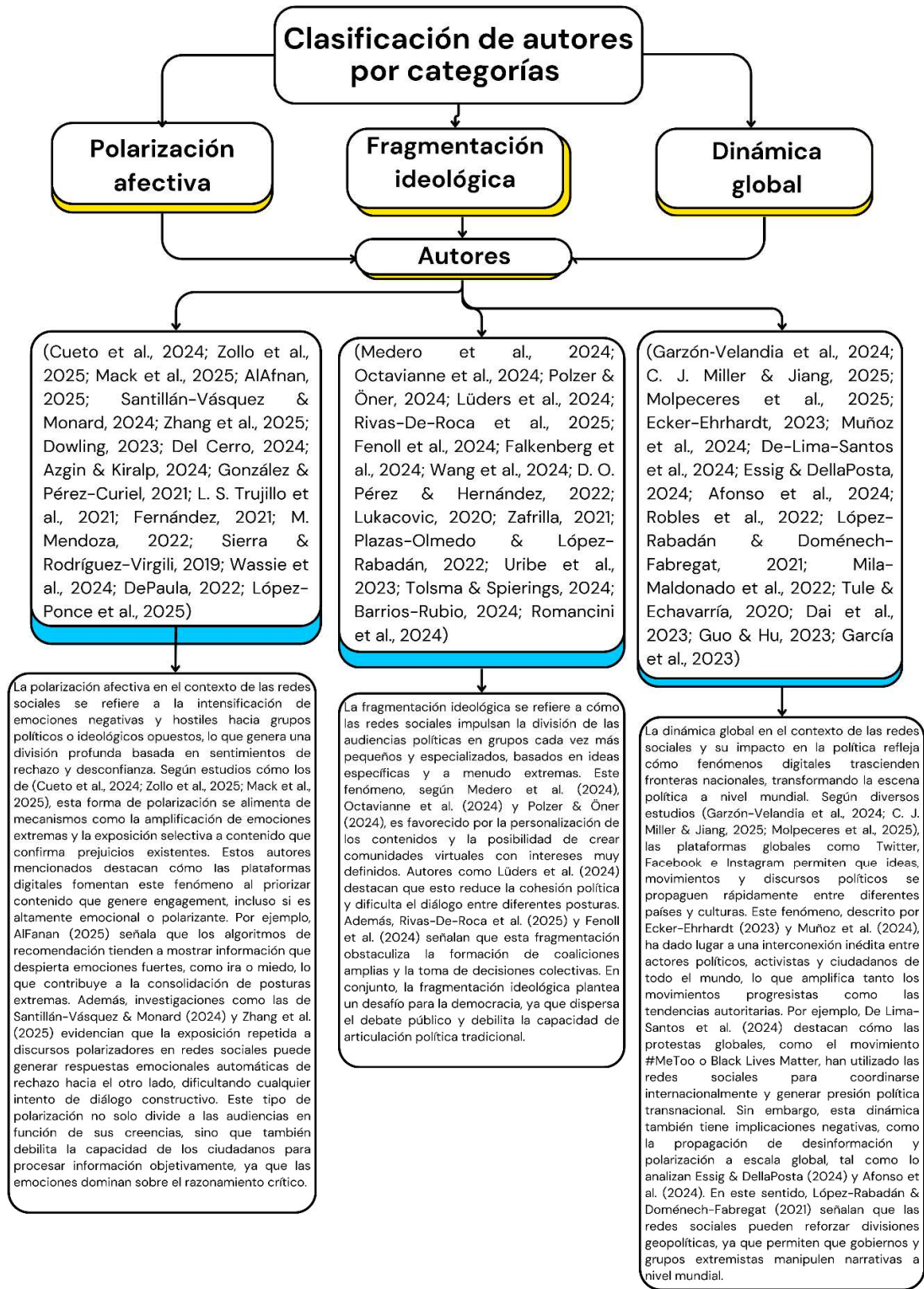


Figure 4.
Categorized authors, own elaboration
4. Discussion

This section within the study is constructed in order to analyze the results, propose new research possibilities from this study and at the same time mention the practical and limiting implications of the research.

4.1. Analysis of the results

In modernity the concept of *political polarization* reaches a high level of publication, the flow of scientific production that takes it as a research core is extensive, it is easily found in different versions and directions; an interesting starting point to continue the research would be to initiate research fieldwork, with surveys and interviews in popular communities with the sole purpose of understanding how this concept interacts between economically disadvantaged populations, although Social Networks have given a digital voice, a place of opinion to more communities, there are also population groups that do not have access to the resource, such as the Internet for example, in addition the less favored populations are those who are most affected by a polarizing, corrupt and non-propositional candidacy, this type of population and its cultural changes, economic, intellectual are the indicators of good political work.

In relation to the most relevant terms discovered between the word cloud and the network of co-occurrences, it is proposed to measure the impact of political polarization on poverty and inequality of nations; this investigative approach arises with the presence of a press release by the Comptroller General of the Nation of Colombia, where its title begins by saying that these two factors continue to be quite high in the country and that the tax reforms applied between 2012 and the present have not resulted in a significant change in the reduction of these gaps. This document shows how the poorest continue to be poor and pay the same taxes while the most advantaged pay less, see below:

The companies with the highest revenues are those that have greater tax discounts in proportion to their income and those that are paying lower effective rates (Comptroller General of the Republic, 2024).

It is difficult to understand that 39.3% of a population is in monetary poverty and that of that percentage 12.2% is in extreme poverty, that is, without any opportunities.

Political polarization fosters disagreement between communities of a Nation, it can be evidenced in the documents analyzed, its immediate effects fragment, separate, weaken the population, community union, affects the territories and this occurs only from the opinion in digital media, but beyond these fragmentary discourses there is a reality for the less favored in the Nations, Some tweet from the comfort of their armchairs and express that some reforms are not functional, while other residents in another geopolitical position cannot even access this content, there are the adverse effects of promoting a destructive, negative concept as a political strategy, used as a political tool.

Beyond the effects on contemporary immediacy, caused by political polarization in Social Networks and other digital media, it is pertinent to consider its effects in the restructuring of a near future where there is talk of democratic deliberation. Digital actions contextualized in politics create transformative digital dynamics and in their own way could also build union, they could disseminate political discourses that create united territories, found a way to build collective perceptions about the socio-political reality of the Nation where they live and the world in general. The role of algorithms must be taken advantage of ethically, with social criticism, these digital political statements must become public spaces of constructive opinion, so that in the future in research such as that of Cueto et al. (2024) we do not speak of disinformation, of weakening through discourses, but on the contrary, The strength of the territorial union is exalted thanks to conscious political speeches.

In studies such as that of Del Cerro (2024) it is analyzed how the configuration of Social Network algorithms affects communication between political entities and the population, generating Polarization with the message, it seems that the growing influence of digital platforms is used in the implementation of algorithmic recommendation models for the generation of environments everything is selective and marked with a hidden purpose; This implies that all these digital platforms from their algorithms are treated to position "something" the "thing itself". Studies analyzed indicate that polarizing personalization in extreme amounts of digital content exposed on Social Networks reinforces pre-existing ideological

positions in that same polarized context, which limits the confrontation with emerging perspectives that could perhaps deepen phenomena that try to resolve population conflicts. This not only affects the political-electoral landscape, as studied in Octavianne et al. (2024), but also has implications for the quality of public political debate and the ability of residents to understand between loyal content and manipulated content. For its part, digital interaction is progressively displacing physical or traditional spaces for discussion in political terms, this situation modifies the way in which social alliances and movements are created that are made from the collective. In contrast to the so-called traditional mobilizations, which are characterized by the permanence of direct contact between participants, in the modern age, this construction of identities, we could call them political, are generated and occur from environments fragmented by dynamics of rapid consumption of information, which is the offer of the digital immediacy of Social Networks. This phenomenon restricts the possibilities of reaching consensus in debates of interest, local, national, international and global.

It is evident that the impact of digital political polarization on politics itself is not limited to one aspect of the discourse, it can be said that this fragmentation, of a social nature, is induced by the digitalization of the political debate, since this opens the door to unstable governance scenarios, which take more strength or become larger in the electoral cycles. which in turn are becoming even more marked by the impossibility of generating agreements, closeness, unity. Political polarization has become an instrument, a tool of political representatives and other sectors with private interests to reinforce narratives of opposition on a permanent basis, where disagreement is encouraged and the democratic element that should be a tool of perpetual confrontation is eliminated.

The analysis of these variables allows us to understand as researchers that Polarization is digital and is not an isolated phenomenon, rather it is a structured mechanism to influence the development of modern political life.

4.2. Practical Implications and Limitations of the Study

To put into practice the objective of this study is to transform its methodology into fieldwork, the mechanisms of information collection must focus on documenting realities that are sheltered under the shadow of polarized discourses and the immediate effects on inequality and poverty, this with the aim of thinking that research is based on solving social phenomena, in contributing to the construction of knowledge and society; this in turn implies the use of both human, technological, and monetary resources, therefore future research is recommended to think about the structuring of a schedule of activities that includes meetings between political parties, social leaders, experts in Social Networks, nationally and internationally.

5. Conclusions

The study shows that political polarization in social networks does not occur as a spontaneous phenomenon, but rather responds to a strategy resulting from the manipulation of leaders, political representatives, with the sole purpose of manipulating public opinion, especially in contexts of election initiation. This strategy is based on the construction of discourses that call for confrontation and fear, weakening democratic dialogue and fostering ideological division among citizens. Research such as that of Mendoza (2022), when analyzing the "terruqueo" in Peruvian politics, and that of Robles et al. (2022), which addresses the role of bots in debates about COVID-19, show how this tactic is deployed with sophistication. Based on the analysis of the 47 selected studies, the study shows how Social Networks profoundly transform the spaces of political interaction, displacing the physical places of deliberation for digital platforms that are shown to be fragmented. Creating a new environment for public discussion, which has become ephemeral, emotional and often lacking in argumentative depth. The figure of the traditional politician is hidden to make room for the digital influencer, whose publications strongly show that now mass mobilization occurs without the need for direct contact; something like the so-called "frozen speech". The challenge is to rethink the public sphere in an environment where the viralization of polarizing content

has more impact than informed debate, which weakens the civic fabric and the possibility of building territory in peace.

It is considered as one of the most relevant findings of the study the inclination towards the opening of new lines of research that link digital polarization with structural phenomena such as poverty and inequality, from this perspective it is suggested that these polarizing discourses have a greater impact on vulnerable populations, which certainly almost all do not have access to the Internet and therefore to digital media, which limits them to counteract or Properly understand the content that circulates. This dissolves into a worrying situation if one considers that these communities are often the target of manipulative narratives that seek to reinforce class or ethnic prejudices, as is the case in populist or exclusionary campaigns. The statement from the Office of the Comptroller General of Colombia (2024) on tax reforms and their unequal impact reinforces this concern, investigating this relationship with fieldwork could make it possible to assess how Social Networks reinforce or aggravate existing gaps in the social fabric.

The results show that the emotionalization of the discourse is a tactic for the production of political polarization in social networks, as an example the analysis of the network of co-occurrences is mentioned, there it is observed that terms such as "emotion" are closely related to "social network" and "polarization", this indicates a communicative strategy based on generating immediate affective reactions rather than rational arguments. In the same vein, Tolsma & Spierings (2024) confirm this trend by showing how in the Dutch Parliament, digital interactions reinforce not only ideological divisions, but also gender, age and ethnicity.

The analysis of the role played by algorithms, bots, bot farms and other forms of automation for the political discourse of polarizing content shows how these technologies not only replicate messages with a high ideological charge, in addition to this they also position them strategically in information flows, with the aim of maximizing their visibility and emotional effect. This automation process significantly reduces exposure to alternative points of view, and thus promotes closed environments, such as the "echo chambers" denounced by Barberá et al. (2015). From here it is believed that the problem is not only technological, but profoundly ethical, since it puts at risk democratic deliberation and the ability of citizens to make informed decisions.

The inclusion of studies from diverse geopolitical contexts, such as: the United States, South Korea, the Netherlands and Latin America, gives the study a comparative dimension with the ability to strengthen its validity, we believe that this diversity allows us to observe common patterns in the use of Social Networks to promote polarizing discourses, regardless of the political system or level of development of the country; in the same way it reveals important nuances, an example of this is that while in Western contexts the analysis of user behavior is prioritized, in Latin America greater emphasis is placed on the effects on social cohesion and clientelism.

Social Networks today represent a space of confrontation between democratic principles and algorithmic logics that prioritize commercial performance over the quality of public debate, which are purely ethical aspects. Although these platforms have expanded the possibilities of citizen participation, they have also given rise to communicative practices that reinforce individualism, disinformation and polarization. This figure of the connected political representative, with the strategic use of hashtags and the extreme personalization of digital content, as observed in the studies by Bode et al. (2015) and Del Cerro (2024), illustrate how algorithms can shape the public perception of reality. This underscores the urgency of incorporating ethical, regulatory and pedagogical principles into digital governance, so that Social Networks can become instruments of democratic inclusion and not devices of ideological fragmentation.

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