Communication, migration and gender: transnational families, activisms and ICT uses[1]

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Abstract

From a brief background of studies around the interfaces between transnational migrations and gender, as well as the place of communication in these studies, we propose to place and discuss two axes of research focusing on gender, migration, consumption and uses of Information and Communication Technologies (TICs). A first axis refers to gender experiences related to the consumption and use of technologies in the processes of constitution and interaction of the so-called transnational families; a second axis refers to the appropriation of technologies in action and projects of mobilization and activisms in which gender and migration are articulated. Proposals of reflections are based on literature and research results already conducted on the subject, especially those oriented to the study of Latin American migrations.

Keywords: Communication. Migrations. Consumption. Gender. Technologies

Introduction

This article proposes a reflection upon the interrelations among Communication, transnational migration and gender. The aim is to identify and discuss two axes of study that concentrate on the consumption and uses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the context of migratory experiences and gender relations. The first axis refers to the gender dynamics linked to the consumption and use of technology in processes of constitution and interaction of the so-called transnational families; the second axis is about the appropriation of technology in experiences of mobilization and activism that articulate gender and migration. The proposed reflection is based upon bibliographic research and revision of results of previous researches developed on this theme, especially in the field of Latin American migration.

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[1] This is a reviewed and expanded version of the article presented in the Cyberculture Research Group of the XIV Encounter of Communication Research Groups, which was part of the XXXVII Brazilian Congress of Communication Science (Intercom), that took place in the city of Foz do Iguaçu, between the 1st and the 5th of September, 2014.

Transnational migration – current scenario and context

The contemporary migratory movement has been intensifying since the last decade of the 20th century. In 2013, a report published by the UN (United Nations)[2] indicated the existence of 232 million international migrants in the world (3.2% of world population) against 214 million registered in 2010 (INFORME, 2010). However, the quantitative register of growth on international migration in the last decades is just one dimension of a phenomenon on which different qualitative factors occur, adding to the complexity of the contemporary migratory movement.

In this context, amongst the variety of experiences that integrate the scenario of migrations today, it is possible to perceive growth in the number of countries involved in migratory networks; More diversity of ethnic as well as cultural groups integrating these networks; a significant amount of women migrating independently or as householders; an increase in the number of people living and working abroad irregularly and an increase of refugees and asylum seekers; growth of migration due to environmental disasters; and the intensification of circular migration and temporary migration (BLANCO, 2006).

In addition to that, the increase of multidimensional migratory movements has been indicated as one of the specialties noticed in the transnational migration phenomenon nowadays. A report published in 2013 by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) states movements between the so-called high-income countries, such as from the United Kingdom to Canada (North-North migration); movement from high-income countries to low and middle-income countries such as from Portugal to Brazil (North-South migration); and migratory flow between low and middle-income countries, for example, from Indonesia to Malaysia (South-South migration) (INFORME, 2013, p.31).

The quantitative and qualitative impact of transnational migration can be seen in the significant resources generated by the migrant workforce in a global scale, as well as the amount of remittance sent to their original countries**3**. The resources coming from remittances is helping activate and encourage the creation and management of a transnational network of migrants and, within the network, the use of communication technologies on migratory dynamics, including their own formal and informal circuits of remittances[4].

Some researchers are striving to show the limitations of the dominant economist

2   Available in: http://www.onu.org.br/mundo-tem-232-milhoes-de-migrantes-internacionais-calcula-onu/. Accessed on: July 3rd, 2014.
3   In 2014, US$ 583 billion in remittances were sent globally by migrants, according to World Bank's estimates. http://exame.abril.com.br/economia/album-de-fotos/os-10-paises-campeoes-em-remessas-de-imigrantes. It is important to remember that the World Bank's data do not include remittances sent informally.
4   Formal circuits are constituted by banks, courier agencies or specialized financial agencies, such as Western Union; and informal transfers are constituted by money sent directly from one person to another or the exchange between family members or people trusted by the migrants.

view in the literature about transnationalism that tends to emphasize the productive impact of North-South monetary remittances in the migrant's original country. Guarnizo (2004) turns to Peggy Levitt – author who introduced the concept of social remittances – to analyse the diasporas as source for not only economic remittances, but also social remittances, thus highlighting the capacity of migrants to hold, exchange and circulate ideas, behaviors, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending-country communities.

Following this perspective, authors such as Portes (2004) and Haesbaert (2007) analyze the repercussions of having communication technologies on the reconfiguration of ways of exercising migrant transnationalism, especially in regards to the constitution of migration networks[5] and the reordering of territorial experiences of migration locally and globally. Even though the history of migrations is marked by examples of transnationalism, Portes (2004, p.74 – Our translation) reminds us that the phenomenon received a strong impulse with the "advent of technologies in the field of transportation and telecom, which came to greatly facilitate the quick communication of national frontiers and big distances". According to Haesbaert (2007), the velocity of means of transportation and the access of communication technologies are two fundamental factors that stimulated experiences of multi-territorialization and that, in a way, changed the contemporary sociospatial and geographic dynamic throughout the 20th century. Without disregarding "objective" causes and material circumstances which motivate migration or the relations of inequality which permeate the experiences of human mobility, both authors value the importance of migrant agencies and relativize the overdetermination of economic factors - such as poverty and unemployment - on triggering migratory flow.

Sassen (2004) gives us other clues to understand migration as a result of relations established between countries of emigration and immigration in the context of globalization. The author warns us of the complexity of possible links created by economic and social dynamics and international policies related to colonial and neocolonial formations and to the current ways of economic globalization. Links that will impact on either the direct recruitment of migrant workers by employers or governments through the migratory networks, or the constitution of networks of illegal human trafficking.

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5   From a sociocommunicative perspective, we adopted the notion of social network as a way of social interaction, spaces of coexistence and connectivity, defined by the dynamic exchange made by those who use it (RIZO, 2003). Truzzi (2008) says that the concept of social media has also become relevant for the study of contemporary migration after the acknowledgement that these social networks exist before, and a lot of times, feed migratory networks. When applied to migratory phenomena, these networks can constitute, according to the author, a valuable instrument for the study of the social action of individuals that want to migrate and promote an analytical dislocation of arguments of the neoclassic economic theory and the functionalist sociologic theory that postulate the existence of a weak space of autonomous action for the individual under normative orientations. It is important to highlight that the migratory movements are not necessarily implied or resulting in the constitution of networks, possibly making reference only to the populational displacements that set migration in different historical steps.

We can see that both perspectives – of sociopolitical and economic links upon which transnational migration are created and the recognition of these spaces of agency by the migrants themselves — are articulated under the development of studies of interfaces between gender and migration, initially oriented by the affirmation of a process of feminization of migration, as we begin to approach this subject in the following section.

Transnational Migration and Gender

In the context of links between countries of origin and migration, Sassen (2004) brings specific reflections regarding the emergence of a female migration. On the one hand, the author talks about the relation of this type of migration with human trafficking, and on the other hand, she talks about the workspaces that women began to occupy in migratory dynamics and in the context of an "economy of contemporary migration" from its work in domestic labour or in high-level professional occupations in global cities.

The interface gender-migration is placed as a recent field of study in the area of migration theory, in which feminization dynamics on international migration came to be centralized. Many of these studies, according to Rosas (2013), are justifying part of its importance on the so-called "quantitative feminization of migration", i.e., the increase of women participating in transnational migratory flows[6]. Most of the Latin American approach has been prioritizing South-North migration, i.e., those to the United States and Europe, especially Spain, whereas the production about intra-regional migration (South-South) has been less expressive, more recent and with similar concerns, questions and approaches from the extra-regional migratory movements.

Among the themes of transnational migration and gender which are raising more interest are the conditions that gender, along with other inequality systems, imposes to strategies, decisions, networks and migratory selectivity; the consequences of migratory movements upon the female autonomy; transnational family practices and mothering from a distance; global chains of care[7] and domestic labor; and the institutions and migratory policies as a form of reproducing inequality. In addition, there are incipient studies that approach return migration as a result of economic crisis and of migratory policies of

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6   Up to 40 years ago, women represented about a half of the migrants of the world. In the context of Latin American and Caribbean migration, the quantity of migrant women that lived in the United States was 2 million in 1980. In 2010, there were already 10 million. In Spain, the number of migrant women added up, in 2001, to 464,000, becoming 1.4 million in 2011. (ROSAS, 2013, p. 131).

7   The "global chains of care" or "world chains of affection and assistance", concept coined by Hotschild (2001), makes reference to a number of personal ties between people from all over the world in a labor of assistance (to the elderly, children, families etc.) paid or voluntary. Gregorio Gil (2013, p. 22) reminds us that Hochschild (2001), inspired by the study performed by Pierrete Hondgneu, Sotelo and Ernestine Avila (1997) with interviews to Latin housekeeper women in Los Angeles, says that these chains connect three types of carers: one in charge of the children of the emigrants in the original country; other that takes care of the children of the woman that takes care of the children of the emigrant; and a third person, the emigrant mother, who takes care of the children of the "First World" professionals.

expulsion implanted by the main extra-regional destinations. Another shared characteristic between analyses of South-South and South-North migration is the fact that there were and there are women as the protagonists of migration, revealing the already mentioned recognition of spaces of migrant agencies as a perspective present in researches about the relation between transnational migration and gender. (ROSAS, 2013)

However, the processes of feminization of migration will be also reflected critically by researchers such as Gil (2009) when he alerts, for instance, about the narrow link between the growing presence of women in migratory flow oriented towards Europe and the process of feminization of poverty that supports some of the neoliberal economic policies. Ariza (2007), on the other hand, calls attention to the repercussions of the tendency of reducing the idea of gender to women and at the same time limiting women to the household environment on migration research. The author attributes this tendency to the relation that a major part of studies establish between gender and provision of care based on a western notion of a heterosexual family. Gil (2013) makes a similar remark when he suggests two problems that, in the Spanish context, have oriented primarily the research on Latin American migrant women in Europe: "Transnational mothering" and "global care chains".

The researcher draws attention to the lack of studies about migration and gender that cover masculinity, or, yet, the experiences of migration outside heteronormativity[8]. Gil (2013) defends the necessity of researches to add the category gender not as a mere variable sex-gender or the opposition man *versus* woman, but as a principle of social organization, production of inequality and power relations.

It is also important to mention the impacts - on gender and migration studies - of the border feminism as a Latin and Latin American version of the post-colonial feminism. In this area, researches advocate the use of the concept of intersectionality for a displacement of essentialist perspectives of gender and as a critique of the "adding" character of some conceptual and methodological proposals that add to gender other categories of inequality such as class, race, generation, without really seeing the connection between them. The different forms of articulation of many categories of inequalities are not, however, a new theme in gender studies, but they were always present as a fundamental concern in the area of the different feminisms. Many authors locate the origin of the term in the black feminism, and, in general, on what was called, in the 80's, as dissent feminisms, i.e., the voices of other "non-white heterosexual women" that started to question the legitimacy of the white, middle-class, western feminism. (HERRERA, 2013a)

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8   Such as the LGBTQ (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transsexuals, Queer).

Communication, transnational migration and gender

Gil (2009) invites us to consider the impact of the rise, in the European context, of visibility dynamics and even hypervisibility of migrant women in the political and mediatic field related to the growth of female protagonism in migration. This visibility has been based on flows and narratives that privilege, among other elements, not only the relation between migrant women and prostitution, the cultural practices such as the use of a veil, clitoral ablation, the so-called honor crimes, the alleged growth in birth rate, but also the function of women as necessary mediators and facilitators of integration. What suggests, according to the researcher, a uniformizing construction of the category "migrant women" and the frequent management of those representations in the perspective of showing the migratory phenomenon as a threat and also as a way of legitimating the social exclusion of the migrant population.

Mediatic representation of migrant women has been one of the types of approach with significative presence in the studies about education, migration and gender in the Ibero-American context. In this perspective, there are researches seeking to reveal and deconstruct representations that reinforce hierarchy and inequality on gender relations, especially through the notion of sexualization and criminalization of female migration and the association of female migrants to prostitution or human trafficking.

About some of these studies in the specific field of the representation of Brazilian women in the European press, Fernandes (2013) takes on the reflection of Adriana Piscitelli (2008) to synthesize the type of pattern that dominates these representations and have been recurring in these studies[9]. According to Piscitelli, an "ethnic racism" marks the experience of the Brazilian migrant woman, operating for racialization and sexualization of her body, regardless of skin color, based on the association built historically between sexuality and miscegenation. All Brazilian women are, thus, considered belonging to a mixed race and attributed to them is a "naturally intense disposition to have sex and a tendency to prostitution, combined with ambiguous notions about her femininity styles, considered submissive, with cheerful disposition to domesticity and motherhood". (PISCITELLI, 2008, p.269 – Our translation). About this theme, Piscitelli (2008) makes it very clear that it is not possible, however, to say that black or white Brazilian women, poor or well established in the job market, living legally or irregularly, would be subject to the same experiences of racism and discrimination. The effects of these notions might be attenuated or accentuated by a number of variables, among which, there are "race" and social status (PISCITELLI, 2008, p.269).

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9   Even though he deals, in the study, specifically about the Brazilian women, Fernandes says that the tropicalized notions of "femininity" also affect other Latin Americans such as the Colombian and Cuban women.

Furthermore, Fernandes remind us that many of the research on gender representation tend not to essentialize the processes of racialization and sexualization of Brazilian women, acknowledging the existence of constant spaces of negotiation of female positioning in migratory contexts, enabling, for example, the possibility of rejecting allegedly natural sensuality of the Brazilian woman as being strategically "performed" for numerous ends in the work market and in love relationships.

In summary, the ways of representation of migrant women comprise limitations, but also a number of agencies, such as those we came to reflect upon from two main points of view on gender studies – the transnational families point of view and the activism point of view – in their bindings with experiences of consumption and uses of ICTs.

Migration, transnational families and the use of ICTs

The theme of transnational families and, related to that, the experience of transnational mothering[10], make reference to women who migrated and left children in the original country, becoming active agents in the construction of "networks", "chains", "transnational families" or "transnational communities". Such perspective has not been exempted from criticism regarding the naturalization of the private, of home, of the domestic and of motherhood in its association with the feminine, or yet, the construction of the category of "migrant woman" based on their procreative bodies and on a femininity set on biology. According to Gil (2013, p.16), to assume that all migrant women who leave their children in their original countries are oriented by a loving mother-child bond, and through a universal pattern, to convert them into subjects of transnational action, more than a given fact, should be a fact to be questioned.

In addition to that, to think only about the agency in maternal practices would leave out a supposed capability of a "transnational agency" for those women who do not have children in their original countries, but have relatives or friendships that are not their biological offspring, or the fact that this agency does not go necessarily through the affirmation of maternal bond. The question would be about the possibility of classifying transnational practices separating the maternal bond from other bonds, commitments and ends. It would be relevant, therefore, to politicize the notion of affection, assistance and motherhood, extract it from the private and locate them, as Gil (2009 – Our translation) defends it, in the center of the political and historical processes that "build gendered,

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10   And, in the minor rate, transnational fathering.

sexualized, racialized, ethnicized and unterritorialized bodies"[11].

Thus, this approach on transnational families that is initially developed as a derivation of experiences of female migration, starts to comprise, subsequently, the problematization that includes multiple relations between family members (HERRERA, 2013b). Even though transnational families have always existed as a result of the contemporary migratory processes[12], what would distinguish them from the current families would be precisely the presence of a subjectivity and bonds related to the conscience of being and forging a family from a distance. Herrera (2013b) attributes such specificity, in a broader sense, to the advancement of communication technologies that have been contributing to abolish the idea of physical presence as a pre-requisite for the formation of families or the impulse for production and circulation of information amongst family members, either for the exercise of mothering or fathering at a distance and the dispatch of remittances.

In researches on reception and uses of ICTs performed with migrants from different nationalities[13], it was possible to see some experiences of approximation, familiarity and "affective management" of transnational families. From the stories obtained from interviews, migrants from different nationalities would tell the daily and weekly routine of family meetings and follow-up of school assignments of the children through using communication softwares such as Skype or social media websites; or, yet, the effort of family members on introducing themselves to the world of internet on rural towns where the access is restricted in order to establish connections with the family member who emigrated. Some of the younger interviewees, especially women, also manifested concerns towards the excessive control exercised by family members through the imposition of routines of daily connection and communication via the internet. Also, there were migrant women that, as a strategy of strengthening bonds with local people where they migrated, revealed the effort of reducing time online in order to prioritize daily life experiences less mediated by the family relations in the country of origin.

Experiences of transnational families in which there is the presence of ICTs are also extended to the universe of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and queer) migration. This perspective is still not very explored in the research on gender and transnational migration, and appears, in the academic context, also reflected on other forms of narrative, such as audiovisual. One example is the documentary *Angel*, which narrates

11   According to the author, there would be the necessity of revising the androcentrism revolving around the concept of transnational agency that is being applied, naturalizing the dominion of the "feminine" in opposition to the "masculine". It would be dissociating again the world of family, altruism and affection, the universe of market, politics, interest and reasoning.

12   In Latin America, Herrera (2013) says we can go back to the colonial times to find traces of separated families, products of internal migration of agricultural women towards cities of transborder migration.

13   These researches are published in Cogo, Brignol (2015), Cogo (2012), Cogo, Huertas, ElHajji (2012), Cogo, Huertas, Gutierrez (2008).

the story of a poor, black, former boxer, transsexual, Ecuadorian woman[14], who migrated from Guayaquil to Paris, where she started to work as a sex worker and has a very specific role as a link to a chain of affection and care of her mother, brothers and nephews that remained on Ecuador.

Upon Angel falls a chain of care that articulates the family in the original country and the migration country through the protagonism that presupposes the dispatch of regular finance values to her family members on Ecuador and the efforts that entail the management of these remittances for the well-being of the family[15]. The agency that Angel produces for the management and care of her mother, brothers and nephews on Ecuador helps destabilize the hegemonic image of a family – supported by a patriarchal culture that appears as dominant in the original country of the immigrant – and at the same time for a displacement related to the exclusivity of the image of a woman migrant as a carer. This summary appears on a testimony of one of Angel's brothers collected on the documentary: "I believe Angel is much more than a provider, she is a mother, a symbolic mother, because if she wasn't who she is, if she was a normal man, as any one of us, I wouldn't be here".[16]

This chain of care with Angel being a central character comprises dynamics of consumption and the use of communication technology (television, computer, cellphone, camera) reassuring approximation, maintenance and reupdate processes from their bond with their family members on Ecuador through an internet connection and the use of a cellphone. ICTs are also mediators of the function of affective bond that Angel takes on in order to help her sister, who also lives in France, live the exercise of mothering from a distance. On one of her trips to Ecuador, Angel shows pictures of his mother to her nephew on a television screen and a camera. She is forbidden to travel to her original country due to her legal status in France.

Angel experiences "affective management" of her transnational family crossed by tension such as those related to the expectation of consumption of family members who want to receive gifts with technological resources (computers, cell phones etc) on Angel's visits to Ecuador. Or, yet, tensions from an ethical perspective, linked to the consumption that appears on interviews from Angel's family neighbors when they criticize the economic exploration on the immigrant by the Ecuadorian family members.

About the same type of tension on the consumption of ICTs in the context of migration and gender studies, Herrera e Carrillo (2009) show the moralistic sense about consumption that dominates a big part of representation of parents and teachers about the dynamics

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14   See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pz6-doc9blA

15   In the documentary, the remittances appear to be being used by Angel's Family members for acquiring goods that are not considered by the Ecuadorian migrant as first necessity products.

16   See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pz6-doc9blA. In the documentary, Angel refers to her mother as "my husband in Ecuador".

of maintenance of migrant children, highlighting the impact of these representations on establishing emotional bonds in the context of transnational families. Especially when it is about the investments that parents make on the acquisition of technologic devices for the children who remain in the original country, these representations tend to emphasize the waste on spending remittance resources at the same time they associate the money used to the loss of value and "identity". The existence of cell phones, computers, video cameras and any other device that does not belong in the traditional context is perceived as a negative indicator by parents and teachers as well as being responsible for the creation of contrasts and distinctions between young people in their original country (amongst those who have and who do not have these devices).

In their recent studies about transnational families in the context of Ecuadorian migration performed between 2003 and 2005, Herrera e Carrillo (2009) observe that the remittance of money, gifts and objects by migrant parents is perceived as a way of monetizing affective relations based on the argument that migrant children would not have affection from their parents. Those visions end up disregarding the possibilities of reconstructing family ties through the symbolic value represented by this material. In the case of young people - children of parents that emigrated to Spain and the United States - according to the researchers, the respect regarding the use of money and the attachment to certain objects would be explained less by the value of managing resources and objects[17] and more to the symbolic value that allowed youngsters to reveal, inside their social groups, their concern over their parents distance.

In the context of transnational families, Dutra's research (2013) with Peruvian housekeepers in the city of Brasilia brings another type of question related to the pressure and the conditions that a household labor economy imposes on time and the conditions of migrant women on the exercise of mothering from a distance and other everyday interactions. The excessive work hours, the fact they live where they work, the absence of a television in the rooms they sleep in, or even the lack of access to a computer and the lack of know-how for its usage, reduce the possibilities of interaction of the Peruvian women with their original places, as well as their sociabilities in the city where they migrated to.

Evidence found in these studies suggests, according to the summary of Herrera (2013), that the transnational family can be a source of emotional and social support, but they also can and should be seen as a space of conflict, strategy, negotiation and relations of power.

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17   Reassuring the fact that most of the young people interviewed did not deal with big amounts of money.

Transnational migration, activism and ICTs

Inside the dynamics of transnational migration, activism is constituted by numerous experiences that intertwine social, cultural, economic and political dimensions and combine the right of belonging, permanence and mobility. The migrant's transnational activism is forged in the context of increasing efforts of government and institutions to limit, control and regulate human mobility, the entrance and permanence of migrants, according to Mezzadra (2005), who reflects upon migration as an experience that exposes the ambiguity of globalization as the intersection between freedom of subject and action of barriers and limits imposed on this freedom by institutions and technologies of power, much of those circumscribed in the nation-state.

In this context, migrant activism is built on the crescent use of ICTs by migrants, allowing the creation and empowerment of socio-communicative networks. These uses influence on dynamics of planning and implementing migratory projects and the actions of resisting the migration control policies, beginning with, for instance, mobilizations for the right of a universal citizenship (COGO, 2012). ICTs are a strategic tool in the coordination and execution of mobilizations and demands in the context of migratory networks in which their members are not regular and live experiences of clandestinity (VARELA, 2013).

One of the dimensions that are moving the debates around the relation between migration, gender and activism is linked to the growth and, at the same time, the limitations that women face with their insertion and participation in actions and mobilizations around migratory causes or even women causes on their migration countries. The cultural and political conditions faced by migrant women, like those originally from Arab countries, appear in recent analyses of researchers such as Varela (2013). In a study about mobilization of migrant movements in Barcelona, the author brings three elements that can help explain the low participation of women in these movements. First, there is the confirmation of the predominance of male migration amongst migratory groups (nationalities) that create movements of mobilization. The second element used by the author is the fact that many migrant women who live in Spain are legally subordinated to a residency authorization conceived by their father or husband from a family regrouping logic imposed by the State. Finally, the last and third element would be the conditioning that many women coming from Arab countries have for sexist and authoritarian interpretation of Islam that are elaborated by their fathers and husbands.

The male-centric logic of social migrant movements, the excess of work hours and the lack of legalization that restrict women's labor to the prostitution area[18] and domestic

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18   Varela also mentions the conflict related to the preconception manifested by male migrants of the same nationality regarding the presence, in mobilization movements, of migrant women that work on prostitution.

labor, also operate as limiting elements, listed especially by Latin American women as the reason for their lack of participation in the activist migrant movement (VARELA, 2013).

However, even though a majority of activists researched by Varela (2013) in the city of Barcelona are constituted by men, the author does not forget to attest the presence of female figures in the foundation and management of migratory associations or in activities specialized in the field of migratory rights. From a specific event of protest of migrants in Barcelona – the "encierros"[19] cycle of 2005 – Varela also points out the growth of female activism, such as what was seen in the organization of a specific "encierro" by migrant women. Even though the event lasted only one week, this "encierro" was strongly marked by women's effort towards public recognition, either from other migrant women or by other non-migrant people in the neighborhood, and the search and production of a public visibility in the Spanish media.

Under the point of view of the migrant women interviewed in Varela's research (2013), the experiences of female activism are contributing to a change in the social imagery of migrant women in the Catalan society, based on labels such as "submissive and docile" women. Or, yet, for a destabilization of male-centric logic and a demarcation of female rhythms of mobilization in the field of migratory movement.

Thinking about the relation between transnational migration, gender and ICTs, we understand that there are more pending research agendas than consolidated ones, such as the necessity to better understand migrant women becoming one of the main targets of projects of digital inclusion[20], assuming the principle of women as having deficits of formation and sociability, in the area of ICTs, which would result in their confinement to the domestic and familiar environment.

On the gender relations perspective, another theme to explore would be the appropriation of ICTs as an exercise of fathering from distance through the experience of husbands and fathers that remain in the place of origin after the migration of their wives and daughters. Another research agenda would be related to the use of ICTs for deconstructing representations which associate female and transgender migration with prostitution and human trafficking[21].

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19   Mobilization led by undocumented migrants with the intention of obtaining regularity, in which these migrants occupy different places in the city in a closed or semi-closed system See http://www.mugak.eu/revista-mugak/no-30/encierros-de-inmigrantes-en-barcelona

20   One example is the Hola Fabiola program, funded by Fundación Orange and Fundación Directa, with the sponsorship of the Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad da Espanha. www.holafabiola.com. Another example is the workshop of basic internet tools directed by saharauis women living in Jerez de la Frontera (Cadiz) and organized, in 2013, by the Asociación de Mujeres Saharauis en España in collaboration with the Fundação Cibervoluntarios and the Centro de Acogida de Inmigrantes. http://rasdargentina. wordpress. com/2013/06/15/mujeres-saharauis-inmigrantes-y-las-tics/

21   Association promoted by migratory policies and discourses from the government and by policies of protection of non-governmental organizations or migration support groups.

Final Considerations

In this article, we sought to organize a set of issues that are orienting research on Communication, transnational migration and gender within the context of the phenomenon of migration feminization. We chose to emphasize two frameworks of research: transnational families and activism. These elements offer us clues about the specificities that locate the experiences of migration and gender in the perspective of consumption and use of communication technology.

It is important to emphasize the perceptions given on these researches about thoughts that operate restricting the autonomy of migrant women regarding access and appropriation of ICTs in experiences managing transnational families and the exercise of political activism. Perceptions that warn us that the growth of female migration worldwide is not sufficient, in the context of their representation in politics, media or academy, for a deconfinement of migrant women from spaces linked to the domestic labor, to the so-called chain of care or to prostitution and human trafficking.

This deconfinement suggests the necessity that the practices and research about transnational migration, gender and ITCs operate to expand the understanding of the inter-relation without reducing the idea of gender to women or to heteronormativity and that they may contemplate other dimensions such as the masculinity and transgender community. The idea is to propose an approach to gender as a principle of social organization, of production of inequality and power relations so, in that sense, they can also expand the reflection upon migration experience and gender that assume a strong public and political character, as the case of transnational migratory activism that, as well as the transnational families, is developed strongly mediated by ICTs.

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