

Neoliberalism: The New Challenge of Feminism



Third Semester Project

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Table of Content

1. Introduction	3
2. State of the Art	10
3. Theoretical Framework	14
3.1 Neoliberalism	14
3.2 Neoliberal Feminism.	16
3.3 Commodity feminism.	18
4. Methodology	19
4.1 Research design	19
4.2 Philosophical approach	20
4.3 Development of Research and Delimitation.	21
5. Methods	24
5.1 Methods of Data Collection	24
5.1.1. Development of Online Surveys	26
5.2 Method of Data Analysis	26
5.3. Limitations of Methods.	28
6. Analysis	29
6.1. Neoliberal Capitalist influence over feminism	30
6.1.1 Part Conclusion	37
6.2 The feminist notion	38
6.2.1 Part Conclusion	43
7. Conclusion	44
Appendix	47
Figure Sources	47
Bibliography.	47

1. Introduction

Since 1975, when the UN recognized officially Women's Day, after having been celebrated for almost 70 years, it has been possible to see how feminism has become an important topic in the international sphere and how it has managed to find a spot in the economic, political and social debates (Mackay, 2015).

The idea behind this research is to investigate the changes happening within the feminist notion. We find that feminism is gaining presence both in the social debate and in the political agendas of most Western countries, but this increase of importance has also led to disagreements inside the movement and the academic world concerning what feminism is and how it can be characterized (Munro, 2013). Feminism is going to be studied as multiple, hybrid, complex, and changing (Miller, 2010), and in relationship with the historical context in which it has been developed, taking political and economic systems of that specific historical time into consideration. Therefore neoliberalism is the chosen grand theory this research will work with. It represents the economic, political and social structure of most Western countries at present and consequently, it might be influencing the feminist movement and its notion (Fraser, 2013).

When referring to the feminist notion, accordingly to the scholars Mulinari and Sandell (1999), we will have to understand this notion as the *notion of experience*, which does not refer to the individual women but rather to how it is collectively practice. It is possible for women to understand the world from their particular position (Mulinari et al., 1999; 299). As it will be displayed further, the notion of feminism has shifted numerous times through history, and different notions have coexisted as well. '*There has never been just one feminism and the movement continues to be polyphonous*' (Prügl, 2015; 615).

To understand the initiator behind our research and accordingly, to study whether neoliberalism has a role influencing feminism, we will look at the case of Inditex.

Inditex was founded in 1963 in the north of Spain by the famous, today's billionaire Amancio Ortega. Inditex is known for clothing brands such as Stradivarius, Zara or Massimo Dutti. Today, it incorporates 8 different brands under the same entity (Inditex.com).

According to Inditex's official website, the company has since 2013 promoted its campaigns regarding women's empowerment, health programs, protection programs and gender equality policies (Ibid; Estudillo, 2004). A known way of promoting their support for the feminist movement within this entity has been through T-shirts with slogans such as '*Girls do not dress for boys*' (Fernandez, 2018). This enterprise has such a big influence that not even American brands as Benetton can compete with them (Ibid; 59). Inditex is, therefore, also one of the brands that settle what is known by Estudillo (2004) as '*consumer femininity*'. If Inditex influences on how women should dress, it might be possible that the T-shirts, bags and other products representing feminist principles, influences the notion of the concept and the ideas behind it. This, made us, as researchers, question and argue to what extent entities as, in this case, Inditex, are a major example of how a big enterprise has gained a profit from the feminist movement. And might have exploited the Capitalization of, what we consider, the *Fourth Wave of Feminism*, consequently, altering its notion. Our first aim would consequently entail, learning to what extent neoliberal Capitalism has influenced the exploitation of the Capitalization of the *Fourth Feminist Wave*.

In order to achieve our objectives, we have formulated a research question, which is built upon the hypothesis, that the Forth Feminist Wave has suffered from Capitalization due to the influence neoliberalism has had over it. If we achieve verifying the hypothesis, we aim to answer the following question;

- ***How has the Capitalization of the feminist movement affected the notion of feminism within the fourth wave of feminism (last decade)?***

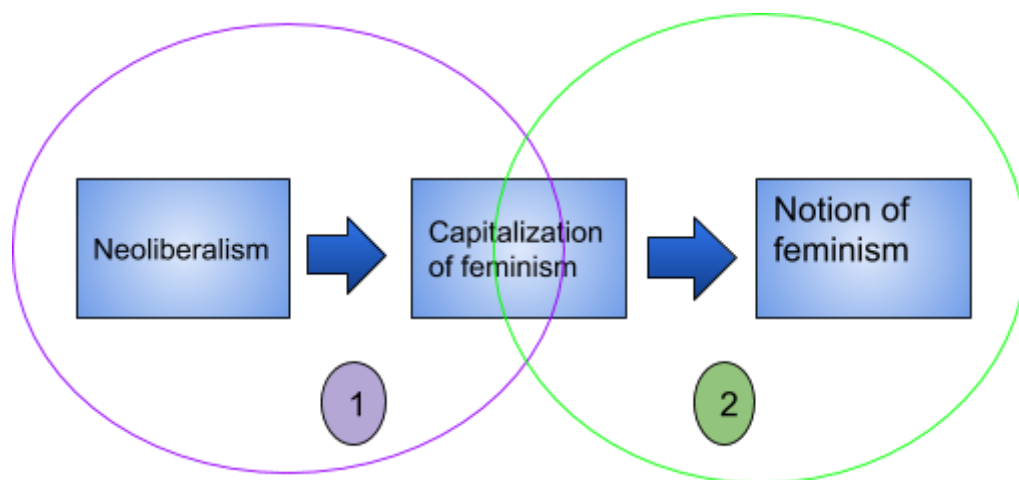


Figure 1. Diagram of the variables leading to the formulation of the RQ and consequently sustaining the hypothesis.

Figure 1 has been developed as a supportive diagram that aims to help readers understand more clearly this research. We aim to investigate the relationship between these 3 dependent variables, which refers to the relation 1 (marked with purple) that can we understand as our hypothesis and relation 2 (marked with green) which is understood in relationship to our research question. Relation one concerns the relationship between neoliberalism and the possible Capitalization of the feminist movement, this relation forms the previously displayed hypothesis. As for the second relation, it studies the possible connection of the Capitalization of the feminist movement and the shift in its notion, forming the research question of this project.

To understand what the *Fourth Wave of Feminism* entails in this research and accordingly, what feminist has become, we will have to look at the historical background of the feminist movement. It is complicated to set a date for the starting of the feminist movement, however, for this research, the beginning of the 1900s will be looked at, as the beginning of the feminist movement. Not all scholars agree on the classification of the movement into the so-called 'waves', but as for the contextualization of this research, we will take Millers' (2010) sorting of the feminist movement.

The beginning of feminist activity' in the start of the 20th century, also known as the *First Feminist Wave*, is characterized by the white, middle-class woman from the United Kingdom

and the United States whom would fight for rights such as voting and owning private properties (Miller, 2010; 2). The so-called First Feminist Wave will not be looked at in relationship with Capitalism due to the belief in Capitalism having not yet been established as the ruling economic, political and social structure.

The founding of the *Second Feminist Wave* finds more consensus within the academic world, setting the starting date in the 1960s, also known as the *postwar era* (Ibid; Mackay, 2015; Fraser, 2013; Brewer & Dundes, 2018). Fraser (2013) identifies the *Second Feminist Wave* as highly influenced by the social, economic and political changes, most of the northern hemisphere suffered once the World Wars were over. She defines it the following way;

“Let me begin by situating the emergence of second-wave feminism in the context of state-organized capitalism. By ‘state-organized capitalism’, I mean the hegemonic social formation in the postwar era, a social formation in which states played an active role in steering their national economies”(Ibid; 212). Consequently, the feminist movement and feminist work developed during those years were strongly influenced by the Capitalist structure most Western countries had established after the World Wars. Therefore, the feminist theories developed throughout those years were impacted by the critical view the academic world had developed, such as the Marxist perspectives of feminism. *“Critiques of the gendered character of class and race relations under multinational capitalism”*(Miller, 2010)

Finally, whether the *Third Feminist Wave* has been established or not, it is up for debate within the academic sphere. Some scholars might also refer to the actual feminist movement as the *Fourth Wave*, taking the starting point in technological advances such as the creation of social media (Munro, 2013). Other scholars, would agree and write only about a Third Wave due to the expansion of the movement, meaning that, the feminist movement addresses new views constantly and therefore it can not be made a further distinction. Some of these annexions were new views in terms of intersectionality, queer and transgender theories, or even the inclusion of men (Mackay, 2013)(Brewer, Donde, 2018)(Burlton, 2018). For this research, the Third Feminist Wave will entail the last decade of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, a time period in which the feminist movement shifted to an intersectional movement, influence by antifundamentalist theories such as poststructuralism and postcolonialism (Miller, 2010).

If, as displayed previously, we look at the First Feminist Wave as the one occurring before and during the World Wars, and ruled by the white Western woman. The Second Wave as the one shaped by the reaction against the overtake of Capitalism. And the Third Feminist Wave as the accommodated one, fighting between neoliberalism and critical positions. We will then, look at the actual feminist movement, or so-called *Fourth Feminist Wave*, like the one being influenced by this new ideology, neoliberalism, and consequently, as the one being Capitalized. Both scholars Rottenberg (2013) and Fraser (2013) agreed on, we are witnessing *'the emergence of a contemporary mode of feminism profoundly informed by a market rationality'*.

In order to interpret this research coherently, firstly we will have to start, by defining feminism and correlated, the feminist movement within our concrete context. The definition of feminist this project will use is based on what we considered to be the most neutral understanding, furthermore, it is the definition, we researchers feel more identified with.

Feminism covers a wide range of ideas, opinions, and views over the societal structures and each of them is based on different political, economic or cultural influences (Miller, 2010).

In order to try to define this concept, within this research, feminism will be understood following the work of a well known Spanish feminist writer Nuria Varela, *'Feminismo para principiantes'*. In her book, Varela (2008), defines feminism as a political and social movement of justice (pg1). Rooted in the empowerment of those women that were capable of opening their eyes, recognizing and analyzing the discrimination they were being exposed to just due to the fact of being women (pg1). Feminism could, therefore, be viewed, in general terms, as a political and social movement that aims to change the established political and social order (pg3). *'Feminism is like an engine that transforms the accepted relations between men and women noticing its consequences in all forms of knowledge. (...)Feminism is a justice theory that day by day works for changing the world in order to allow every single human being to be what they want and live their lives as they want without having a future set due to the sex they were born with'*(pg 9-10).

With this definition of feminisms, we aim to state, that feminism, is a social and political movement that has fought for justice, and against social, political and economic inequalities that are rooted in the social construction of gender. Furthermore, as for our understanding of what feminism is, we feel it is necessary to state, that we believe, feminism must be

understood as an intersectional and radical movement. Intersectional since not all women are the same, and race, religion, sexuality, etc. are other factors under which women can be oppressed. Furthermore, radical, because it must be fought from the roots, meaning that, it has to fight against the system created throughout history by the ruling gender, also known as patriarchy (Eisenstein, 1999;201). *'Patriarchy is the male hierarchical ordering of society'* (Ibid; 202) *'Patriarchy is defined as a system of sexual domination, which, moreover, is the basic system for all types of dominations, such as class and race'*(Varela, 2008).

Continuing with the clarification of concepts, *Neoliberal Capitalism* and *Capitalization* have to be defined. To begin with, it is important to acknowledge the differences that exist within the concept of Capitalism. Therefore, when this project refers to neoliberal Capitalism, it will be with the following definition, given by Sharron Shatil and Dan Cryan (2019); *'Capitalism is the name for a family of economic systems based on ownership of the means of production and trading goods for profit. Capitalist economies tend to be characterized by free competition and industrialization. Broadly speaking, capitalist systems give a central role to the accumulation of resources that can be used for further production. The resources, known as capital, give capitalism its name'* (Shatil et al. 2019). When adding neoliberal to the concept of Capitalism, we are just adding some set of new characteristics. First of all, the term neo is referring to something new, a new form of liberalism in this case, and consequently a new form of Capitalist system. Furthermore, neoliberalism is also referring to a specific historical time context, the actual one, therefore, the research focuses on the last decade (2010-2019). Neoliberalism will be further developed in the theoretical framework of this project, giving light, as well, on the characteristics that define Neoliberalism.

The Capitalist system, and its new variant, neoliberal Capitalism will be studied as an influential factor in the shape our present society has, and thereby, also in the feminist debate.

Capitalization, for this project, will be understood as the submission, from the system, of every human action to profitability (Brown, 2005), in other words, the achievement of economic benefits from human activity, such as the feminist movement. As well as Neoliberalism, the understanding of this concept will be expanded within the theoretical framework.

In order to expose our concern about the feminist movement suffering from Capitalization, we introduced as an example the case of Inditex, a Spanish multinational corporate under which many world-famous clothing brands are (see Inditex.com). The increasing attention to the concept of feminism and especially the idea of *'being a feminist'*, have emerged caused by the evolution that the internet has experienced, giving the opportunity to gain knowledge easier (Munro; 2013). We, as researchers, have noticed how correlated to this increasing attention of the feminist movement, many campaigns within big international companies are appearing. As a consequence, we believe different perspectives of feminism are being confronted and new role models, especially within social media platforms are being born. Throughout the research done within the matter, we found a new term which is slowly finding a spot inside the academic world and the feminist studies, as well as the public debate, *'Femvertising'* (Menendez, 2019)(Golman, Health & Smith, 1991)(Becker-Herby, 2016). This concept is briefly defined by Becker-Herby (2016) as *'advertisement that seeks to empower women'*. What we aim to find out, is whether the empowerment of women is the only consequence Femvertising has when putting in practice. For this, a clothing campaign from one of Inditex's brands will be looked at, alongside with the concept of Commodity Feminism, a concept closely associated with the critique of Femvertising.

This research will stand a sociological and economical approach due to the chosen theories and the field of interest, neoliberal Capitalism, and feminism. The research is based on deductivism and positivism. Positivism because we are stating a hypothesis that we aim to verify, in order to gain a general idea of the change in the notion within the feminist debate (Egholm, 2014; 38-39), and deductivism caused by the way we have structured our project, starting with a theory and hypothesis, followed by collection of data and its analysis, with the aim of verifying a hypothesis (Brymann, 2016). All the choices of approaches will be explained more detailed in section two, *Methodology*.

The way in which we attempt to complete our aims will be through first-hand data collection. First-hand data will be acquired through online surveys, which 'operates by inviting prospective respondents to visit a website at which the questionnaire can be found and completed online' (Bryman, 2016; 230). The detailed development of this method will be exposed later on in this paper. In order to enrich the analysis of the information gained, we will make use of second-hand data as for instance images of T-shirts from Stradivarius, the

work of Becky-Heather on Fevertasing, the concepts of feminism, neoliberal feminism, commodity feminism, and neoliberal theory. There are many possible ways of analyzing data, but we believe that the most accurate one for our research is through a *coding system* followed by *content analysis*. This coding system will comprehend a *coding schedule* and a *coding manual*. The later is a document where all codes are noted. The coding schedule is a sheet where all relevant information from the surveys is stated in each category (Bryman, 2016).

2. State of the Art

In this section, previous paper' outcomes, relating Capitalism and its new form, neoliberal Capitalism, with feminism will be exposed.

Capitalism, for and against, a feminist debate by Ann E. Cudd and Nancy Holmstrom.

This book is constructed upon two different approaches; Ann E. Cudd who is in favor of Capitalism and sees it as a reality and as a feminist ideal, while Nancy Holmstrom is against the perspective of Capitalism within the feminist debate and perceive it as a merely theorized ideal.

On one hand, Cudd (2011) exposes a historical background, related to her grandmother and how women were expected to have many children and take care of the house, ending up dying in the middle of their thirties. *'Women, as a group, remain dominated by men in all societies, with the possible exception of the Scandinavian countries, which have reined in the workings of capitalism through significant, democratically implemented, government interventions in the market and social life. These facts notwithstanding, I shall argue that women's best opportunity for liberation from both poverty and domination by men exists in the development of an enlightened capitalism'* (Cudd et al., 2011).

Explaining the above-stated sentence, enlightened will be understood as the act of not being portrayed as old-fashioned or false beliefs but rather seen in a positive way or showing understanding. Correlated, if we focus on gender, *enlightened capitalism* can be explained as the adjustment of thoughts to a more gender-equal perspective.

On the other hand, we have Nancy Holmstrom who starts by explaining the evolution of Capitalism and how it peaked in 2006 when the book was written.

She argues how with the falling of the Soviet Union a big change happened in the world, where neoliberalism along with the Keynesian perspectives was being formed. In rejection of these thoughts, even against protests, economic crises, and other factors, Capitalism was seen as '*the only solution*'. She describes a situation with pressure and economical instability in 2009, that led to a situation of doubting if we are actually seen as Capitalists or as Socialists (Ibid.).

These two different approaches led us to the question of whether Capitalism actually is good for women? Yes, it means a good economic system but still, women will never be 'winners' in the competition against men. Women are the ones that suffer most inequalities on earth- of course, Capitalism created liberties to women but to which extent can it also restrict them? (Ibid.).

Constructing a theory of capitalist patriarchy and socialist feminism.

One approach that is worth focusing on, is the one developed by Zillah Eisenstein (1999) in her article '*Constructing a theory of capitalist patriarchy and socialist feminism*'. In this text, Capitalism can not be explained without including the concept of *patriarchy*, since there is existing male supremacy before and even after Capitalism had its peak. Eisenstein(1999) argues that there are two kinds of feminists- the radical feminists and the socialist feminists. Socialist feminism is understood as the feminist that goes beyond Marxist theories and aims to prevail in a Capitalist society but with a change in the hierarchical structure and the ruling order in society (Eisenstein, 1999; 205-210).

Socialist feminism has its roots in the Marxist theory of classes and class structure. Therefore the text starts by explaining the relation between class structure, power and the role of women in order to gain a background of the origin of this theory. The article also introduces a background of women's exploitation, referencing to the theories developed by Engels (1884), whose ideas can be summarized as followed: '*The emancipation of woman will only be possible when woman can take part in production of a large-social scale and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time*' (Engels,1884;57)(Eisenstein, 1999; 213).

The author explains how caused by patriarchy, oppression,, and fear, women stayed home and took care of the domestic activities and if by any chance they were able to get a job, they could expect to be paid less than other workers caused by gender differences. Therefore, women were a key element for the stabilization of the society, since they were not paid for their work at the households, there was no way in which they were able to obtain empowerment (Ibid.).

This context can open our eyes for the possibility to understand that women have historically always been under the oppression of class division and class structure, thereby feminism can be looked from a Marxist perspective and with the use of Marxist-theories. The important thing to understand is that nowadays, the same model of societal division can be used to explain the feminist theory. Using the same model, but replacing classes with gender. It is possible to see how Capitalism has changed the structure of our society concerning gender, but there is still an unbalancement when considering women's status and position(Ibid.). As it is agreeably stated in the article: *'Thus the power of feminism grows out of contact with everyday life. The significance of contemporary feminism is in the reinvention of a mode of analysis which has the power to comprehend and thereby transform everyday life'* (Eisenstein, 1999; 215).

Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History

This essay belongs to an introduction to one of the books that Nancy Fraser has developed, the book *"Le féminisme en mouvements: De l'insurrection des années 60 au néolibéralisme"*. Fraser (2012) is capable of making a fascinating development of the, mostly Western, economy correlated to the development of the feminist movement, extending over more than twenty-five years of history (Ibid;4).

In the beginning, we are guided into how the structure of the book as been ordered and formed, exposing briefly what she refers to as *'acts'*. Each act has had some specific changes in politics, economy, history and the feminist context. To give an example of how the acts are divided; The First act- is considered to be before the Second World War, where Capitalism was not totally installed in the Western countries and where the economy had some of the Keynesian features. This era was also known by the differentiation of gender and ethnicity, within the labor market. In the 1960s after *"the Golden age of Capitalism,"* many protests

and demonstrations started caused by mainly ethnicity differentiation and injustices. With the abolishment of sexual repression, sexism, and ethical differences, new movements started to appear, as the feminist movement which is one of the most enormous and perpetual. However, in the 1980s with the end of Communism and the Soviet Union, neoliberalism started to entail a bigger role all over the world, making globalization advance extremely (Ibid; 5).

In these ways of organizing chronologically many historical events and their correlated influence over economy and politics, Fraser (2012) explains how the movement of feminism was also changing.

Fraser (2012) gives this research a new overview of historical context but also the correlated alteration that the core aims of the feminist movement have suffered. She concludes, by explaining that the feminist movements can be seen as a *“triple movement”* because the aim of it should be seeking to generate a new redistribution, recognition, and representation (Ibid; 12) and accordingly, she is looking forward to seeing the big changes that the movement is experiencing nowadays (Ibid;13).

Equality Means Business?-Governing Gender through Transnational Public-Private Partnerships

Elisabeth Prügl and Jacquie True (2014) have in this article, questioned how public and private partnerships are using gender equality and how legitimate and effective this usage can be. To study this, the two scholars have interestingly chosen to study the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Global Initiative, the World Economic Forum’s Women Leaders and Gender Parity Program, the European Union’s Programme on Gender Balance in Decision-making Positions, and the UN Global Compact-UNIFEM Women’s Empowerment Principles for Business (Ibid:5).

With the aim to understand this article and the relation to our research, the following quotation, directly taken from the article, is surprisingly significant; *“(…)actors driven largely by private and economic motives have entered the realm of public policy-making and are participating in making rules and implementing policies in the name of the public interest”* (Ibid; 6). This quotation is easily relatable to our chosen theory of neoliberalism and the idea that every individual will be profit-seeking correlated, our worries about the future of our society can already be confirmed. These actors are deciding and making policies which,

following the neoliberal principle, will be policies in favor of themselves and which can provide profitability.

During this article where different selected cases are exposed along with a set of arguments concerning the participation of women, agenda settings, the treatment of women and the role of the 'partners' in government and policy-making. This article gives us the base for our research, especially if we focus on the conclusion section, where many questions are raised but another question that we found very concerning in regards to our matter; Is feminism an opposition to Capitalism? Is this movement simply incompatible with Capitalist logic and principles? (Ibid; 29)

3. Theoretical Framework

In order to explain the relationship between neoliberal Capitalism and feminism, and consequently, the phenomenon of Capitalization, the neoliberal theory will be looked at. Furthermore, neoliberal feminism will also be displayed as a concept rooted in the feminist theory spectrum. Lastly, we will look into the concept of commodity feminism in order to get a closer view of how enterprises are making use of feminism.

3.1 Neoliberalism

As Brown (2005) displays on her work '*Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy*', neoliberalism is the 'new' governance strategy within the developed countries e.g. The USA. It emerged as a critique of the welfare state theory from the Keynesian school of thought and it is mainly characterized by a radical idea of free-market (Ibid; 37-38). Within the neoliberal theory, social policy and its economic benefits are the most relevant for the development of this research.

It is important to state that neoliberalism will be looked at in this project, as an economic theory and not a political theory. Economic liberalism in general terms refers to the maximization of free trade and free-market with low interference of the state, while political liberalism refers to the responsibility of the state to protect and maximize the individuals' freedom (Ibid, 39) which can be established with any kind of economical structure (*liberal, Keynesian, socialist*). Even though neoliberalism will be gaze from an economical perspective, it can not be forgotten that neoliberalist policies go beyond the economy,

introducing itself to all aspects of a social structure, including social policy (Ibid.) which, as mentioned previously, will be the focus of the theory for this research.

The adding of the term neo- to this conception of economic liberalism entails the difference in the understanding of rationality both theories have. While liberalism views economical rationality as purely natural, neoliberalism believes in its construction (Ibid; 41).

Social policy, becomes, for neoliberalism, another source of economic profit. It gets shaped to be favorable to business and it ignores the roots of the issues it is supposed to treat, such as poverty, class imbalance, and gender inequality, the patriarchal structure (Ibid; 38). This way, those social injustices that worries society will not be ignored by the state but in order to give them the importance asked by society, the state, will be treating these issues from an economic perspective, where profitability becomes an important part of the policy-making; *'this entails submitting every action and policy to considerations of profitability'* (Ibid; 40). Relating this to feminism, a neoliberal system would not ignore gender inequality meanwhile doing something about it means, as well, gaining economic profit.

Neoliberal rationality could be explained as follows; neoliberalism seeks to place the market values into all institutions and social action (Ibid; 40), here is where the understanding of Capitalization gets formed for this project. Neoliberalist policies attempt to achieve benefit from all human interaction, whether it is economical, political or social, *'all dimensions of human life are cast in terms of market rationality.'*(Ibid; 40). For this research then, as it was previously defined in the introduction, Capitalization refers to the act of acquiring economical benefit from all types of human activity, in the case of this project, concretely those defined within the social context, specifically feminism. Summing up, for this research, neoliberal rationality will be understood as the action of capitalizing something with the aim of acquiring economical portability.

Within the neo-liberalist perspective, all policies whether they are political, economic or social are shaped after profitability, but since not all aspects of human life can be cast in terms of economic benefit, institutions are created and rewarded if they are able to reach this aim (Ibid; 40). As scholar Fraser (2013) states in her book *'Fortunes of Feminism'* the shift from a state-organized Capitalism to a neoliberal Capitalism, modified also the relationship between politics and markets, shifting from *'use politics to tame markets'* to *'use markets to tame politics'* (pg 218). This relationship is also explained by Brown (2005), as she displays,

the neoliberal model of defining the state leads to the following conclusion, '*the market is the organizing and regulative principle of the state and society*'(pg. 41). The bearing for this research of the relationship, market-state, lays on the idea that if not even the states remain protected by the ambition of the markets in gaining economic profit, how can we ensure the autonomy of feminism and the prevalence of its ideas under the control of the markets?

In other words, neoliberalism not only creates the proper laws and institutions that ensure the maintenance of its system. It influences all the preexisting structures as well in order to obtain economic benefits from it. '*Neoliberalism produces rational actors and imposes a market rationale for decision making in all spheres*'(Ibid; 40). This idea is interpreted as the institutionalization of Capitalization, meaning that, all types of institutions, private or public, fall into the neoliberal rationality and adjust their activity with feminist principles, which will improve their image and consequently their incomes. Examples of this phenomenon could be the sudden and strong presence of feminism in university lectures, where this topic has found a spot no matter what field is being studied.

3.2 Neoliberal Feminism.

Having displayed neoliberalism theory as a new governmentality system and its consequences over social policy, as well as over feminism, we will now look at the understanding of neoliberalism that has shaped the concept of feminism. Feminism as a concept does not root from any specific theory. As it was displayed in the problem area, feminism has been shaped throughout history in a wide variety of forms due to the political, economic and social context of each period. Neoliberal feminism is, therefore, the new understanding of feminism shaped in the last decade alongside, the growth of neoliberalism.

Elisabeth Prugl (2015) initiates her article with the following statement; '*feminism has gone to bed with neoliberal capitalism and become an instrument of governmentality*'. Furthermore, she does not view neoliberal feminism as a new feminist theory, due to her belief in feminist theories being in constant transformation, instead, she refers throughout her work to the '*neoliberalisation of feminism*'(Ibid; 615). This phenomenon is characterized by creating a new understanding of gender equality as an asset for the markets, being beneficial for business and economic development (Ibid; 614). It forms a governmentality for women in the global markets, replacing the political and social movement for expertise networks that

redefine the goals of women's empowerment (Ibid; 627) adjusting them to the necessities of the market. *'The neoliberalisation of feminism entails the incorporation of movement goals into a political and economic project of globalizing markets'* (Ibid; 626). This is understood as neoliberalism shifting the original aims of the feminist movement into new ones which focus lays on what the market is in need of, as for example, female labor, which usually, is paid cheaper.

Furthermore, feminism, for neoliberalism becomes an individual movement and not a collective one (Ibid). *'Empowerment becomes a matter of shaping responsible selves, women that become internally driven to improve themselves'* (Ibid; 626). It does not seek for the empowerment of all women, taking into account the wide range of women there is in the world (referring to race, sexuality, religion, class, etc), instead, it redefines the ideas of feminism into an individual movement which goal is a self-empowerment through the incorporation of the individual women to the markets. This idea can be extended further than the inclusion of women in the global market. We draw a general view of neoliberal feminism as a movement that empowers women to achieve whatever they wish individually, omitting feminism as a collective movement and consequently forgetting that feminism is the consequence of collective construction of gender inequality and everything this implies. Consequently, this inequality, can not be changed. The change will happen when policies, laws and social structures shift because of a collective effort of all society to change them, and not as the result of the competition among women. Scholar Rottemberg (2013) works as well with this new understanding of feminism shaped by neoliberal rationality, and she agrees on this individualization of the movement. For Rottemberg (2013) the problems does not lay in the loss of the feminist principles, these new feminist are aware of the inequality between men and women, but they are not aware of the cause behind this inequality, *'she disavows the social, cultural and economic forces producing this inequality'* (pg 2-3). Furthermore, Rottenberg(2013) identifies a relationship between the individualization of the movement, the work-family balance, and the benefit-cost calculus from the neoliberal market necessities (ibid).

Lastly, scholar Brown (2005) refers to this issue in the following way; *'individuals as rational, calculating creatures whose moral autonomy is measured by their capacity for "self-care"—the ability to provide for their own needs and service their own ambitions'* (pg. 42) She is not referring to any specific individual, but this definition can easily be put in

terms of neoliberal feminism, viewing woman as rational individuals capable of procuring themselves with whatever they need or want.

3.3 Commodity feminism.

The concept of commodity feminism does not root so far from everything displayed previously. For Goldman et al. (1991) this concept originated in the attempt of magazines back in the 1970s to '*redefine feminism through commodities*'(pg. 336), as a consequence of Capitalism's influence. Commodity feminism can be then understood as, the cast of feminism in terms of the sale of goods and services (Becker-Herby, 2016, 12). This last scholar identifies in commodity feminism many critical ties to Femvertising. As it was exposed earlier, the term Femvertising is new for the academic sphere, therefore Becker-Herby decided to introduce the term as following; '*Femvertising is a direct response— or even a direct backlash— to the commodity feminism that dominated female-centric advertising from the 1970s-early 2000s*'(Ibid, 17). Femvertising is viewed then, as the new, harmless trend that seeks to empower women through advertisement. Thus, this will be critically analyzed.

Consequently, we state, that the relevance of the concept, commodity feminism, builds upon the new phenomenon Femvertising and the case of the multinational enterprise, Inditex.

Continuing with the work of Goldman et al. (1991) we can recognize a set of characteristics of concern when defining the concept in matter. Commodity feminism answers to the Capitalist dynamics. It looks at how Capitalism shapes feminism as yet another raw material to exploit in order to achieve the most value out of it when sold as a commodity. It depoliticized feminism in order to turn it into another income source, leaving aside the cores of the movement. It becomes an individual movement of free choice and *lifestyle* while forgetting about the social, economic and political struggles it fights against (Ibid, 336). We find a lot of similitudes to the characterization of the principles neoliberal feminism accounts of.

This concept will allow us to get a taste of the complexity of the marketing field. However it is important to mention that this field will not be our main focus, thus, the usage of the concept, will enable us to analyze Inditex's' feminist campaigns in a deeper form and identify or not Capitalization. As Becker-Herby (2016) points out commodity feminism does not advertise with the sexualise image of women, but with its empowerment (pg 15). This allows

reflecting upon whether this type of advertisement is being beneficial for the feminist principles, or as Goldman et al. concluded, it is just another market strategy where the only matter is the capital.

4. Methodology

The following section comprehends two different parts. The first part will explain the choice of research design and philosophical approach, while the second part, will expose the process of development within the framework of this research and the limitations encountered.

4.1 Research design

When choosing a research approach, the aims of the research and the mode they will be achieved should be kept in mind at all times. With this research, we intend to identify a set of factors that are correlated between them. In the first position, whether or not Capitalization is happening within the feminist movement, and if it is happening, we aim to identify the differences in the notion of feminism, this possible Capitalization has had, as a consequence.

This research stands with a deductive approach. A deductive approach is drawn on a previously established theory or idea in order to construct a hypothesis that can be confirmed or rejected based on the findings from the data collection (Bryman, 2016; 21). The reason behind this choice was because we had a pre-established idea or hypothesis rooted in the knowledge gained by looking at the neoliberal theory. This sustained idea took the form of a hypothesis and consequently constructed the rest of the research upon it.

Knowing we stand with deductive reasoning, we need to decide which research strategy and research design are the most accurate in order to be able to reach the best possible outcome. The best choice for our research, was consequently, a cross-sectional design or survey design. Bryman (2016) defines this research form as following; '*A cross-sectional design entails the collection of data on a sample of cases and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables, which are then examined to detect patterns of association*' (pg. 53) The problem puzzle of this research can be understood as the intention to describe the connection between neoliberalism and the Capitalization of the feminist movement, and consequently the relation between the Capitalization of the movement and the shift in its notion (*see Figure 1*). Furthermore,

surveys were thought to be the best method of data collection since it allowed us to collect a wide variety of samples, of the opinions women have, and, moreover, do it at the same time framework. Finally, the data gathered must be quantified and consequently measured and analyzed.

Every research design follows a strategy, that, in this case, would entail a quantitative research strategy. Quantitative research entails a deductive approach, focusing on testing theories and their relationship with the research (Bryman, 2016; 29). It takes an ontological starting point in objective reality and follows the norms and practices of positivism (Ibid).

As it has been mentioned previously, positivism, as a philosophical approach, characterizes quantitative research. Therefore, this approach was chosen, and consequently will be displayed below. Following the example given by Bryman (2016), taking a quantitative strategy means that the focus of our research will stand in trying to explain the causes and consequences of the variation within the feminist notion (pg. 163).

4.2 Philosophical approach

Keeping our aims in mind, we concluded that the issue our research is studying is very broad, and covers a very complex field. We aim to generate a general conclusion out of a small example, so the conclusions acquired could be used when studying this issue in any other part of the world, or for example, with any other type of social and political movement, different from feminism. We then identified this set of characteristics as positivistic.

Positivism can be related to our project since we aim to establish a generalized framework for the feminist debate, based on the results gained in the analysis section. Furthermore, we do not intend to understand what is happening with the notion of feminism, nor to identify the structure creating the shift, or understand the process taking place. Instead, we aim to explain what differences might be noticed in the possible shift of the notion of feminism.

In a positivistic approach, there is a hypothesis built upon a previous theory, in this case, neoliberalism, which we target to verify. This will be possible through arguments sustained by the chosen theories and the first-hand data obtained from the online surveys, alongside with second-hand data.

One essential characteristic of positivism taken into account for the development of this research is the concept of *Individual reduction*. According to Egholm (2014) *'This (individual reduction) means that all collective phenomenon and social conditions are studied and understood through individual actions. As Popper also emphasizes: '(...) all social phenomena, especially the functioning of social institutions, should be understood as resulting from the decision, etc, of human individuals and (...) we should never be satisfied by explanations in terms of so-called 'collectives''* (Popper 1959:98)(Egholm, 2014; 83).

Therefore, we, as researchers, also stand that by studying data gained from only a sample of the population, we are able to obtain a collective and general perspective of the feminist debate, that will enable us to gain a general overview (Bryman, 2012; 24).

Positivism has inspired most of the research of this project, thus, we would like to point out that we do not consider this research purely positivistic. The realistic ontology, characteristic from positivism and consequently of quantitative research as well, delimitates the validity of our project, main quality criteria in social research (Ibid; 41), this delimitation will be exposed below.

The previously exposed issue concerning the nature of the relations being studied in this research, also lead to choosing Emile Durkheim's (1895) explanation of *What is a social fact?* displayed on the extract from Delanty and Strydom (2003).

Durkheim's explanation of social facts can be summarized as social facts being phenomena external, or independent to the individuals (Ibid; 26). In the case of our project, we view, following Durkheim's definition, neoliberalism and Capitalization as external phenomena to the feminist movement, meaning that they are not intrinsic of the feminist movement. Feminism is also viewed following the previous definition. *"They constitute, thus, a new variety of phenomena; and it is to them exclusively that the term 'social' ought to be applied. [...]it is clear that, since their source is not the individual, their substratum can be no other than society,"* (Ibid; 27.)

4.3 Development of Research and Delimitation.

There are different ways that would enable us to achieve our objectives, this also entails different approaches and different methods of data collection. Our aim has changed slightly during the development of this research and in the same way, has our research question.

Nonetheless, the Capitalization of feminism has always been a central matter inside this research. However, the first suggestion was to develop a historical analysis of the feminist debate and the perception of this concept, alongside, the evolution of Capitalism. But when narrowing this down, the focus point and the main interest appeared, drawing our attention to the present feminist movement, or Forth Feminist Wave. As a consequence, we formulated the previously exposed hypothesis and accordingly research question.

One limitation that has appeared during the development of this research is the matter of validity. Validity is the main quality criteria for quantitative research (Bryman, 2016; 41). It refers to whether the measures concluded represent really the reality of the phenomena aiming to explain (Ibid, 42) This became our main concern from the begging of our process. As we point out in the problem area, we believe feminism is understood depending on the historical context, and consequently the political, economic and social context. Therefore, the results of this research can not be generalized, caused by the lack of external validity (Ibid). Even though our research is limited to a woman belonging to what we defined as Western countries, we do not consider our findings can be generalized to the total population belonging to Western countries. This issue will be brought up again, concerning the limitations in the choice of method of data collection and correlated usage of sampling.

Hereunder, quantitative research is connected with our choice of philosophical approach, positivism. If we had taken any other approach, as interpretivism, or a critical perspective like social constructivism, a qualitative strategy would have been more appropriate and consequently, the focus of our aims would have changed. We strongly considered taking social constructivism as an approach instead of positivism. Social constructivism would have firstly, allowed us to work with feminism as a socially constructed reality (Egholm, 2014; 145), and consequently, subjective to not only history and politics but race, class, religion, sexuality etc. Furthermore, we, as researchers could have engaged with the issue to a higher degree than with positivism, where value-neutrality is a characteristic (Ibid). But this approach would have established the focus of our research in identifying which structures are influencing the notion of feminism and what is the process by which it is happening, instead of trying to explain what this change of notion within feminism is entailing, as positivism permits.

When engaging with a topic as sensitive and variant as feminism, the ethics behind this matter does also have to be taken into consideration, since simply the opinion concerning this matter can be so differentiated. If we had developed an interpretative approach, ethics would have to have a main focus during the whole research.

Thus, to summarize we see a clear differentiation within the feminist debate, caused by many different factors, as exposed above, and we are therefore also aware of the lack of meanings and perceptions within this research.

Having acknowledged one of the weakest points of this research, we brought up for debate whether surveys were the best method to use. Other methods, such as semi-structured expert interviews could have been used as well. Thus, we would not have been able to get a general view over the problem being studied, the shift in the notion of feminism due to the neoliberal influence, instead, we could have gained an in-depth knowledge of something more concrete, as the effect of neoliberalism over a particular understanding of feminism.

If we had followed the first direction of this research. we would have developed a content analysis based on the data gained from the expert interviews and the analysis of transcripts of speeches and works of the different feminist women during history. However, standing with this new angle, our intention will be to develop a coding system formed upon the data acquired by the surveys, followed by an analysis that will expose a detailed interpretation of our quantitative data and choice of theory (*Neoliberalism*). All this analysis section will entail all the data collected second and first hand.

During the development of the analysis section, we noticed how an essential part of our research was slightly harder to answer only through the surveys we had conducted. This complication was in regard to the analysis of the neoliberal influence over feminism. Therefore, just after having coded the data gained from the questionnaires, we decided to go a step backward and look through the academic literature again, in order to find the right tools to develop the analysis. As a consequence, we decided to analyze the images of different feminist T-shirts belonging to Inditex with the help of the concept of *Commodity feminism*, given by Goldman et al. (1991), and the work of Becky-Heather (2016) about *Femvertising*.

It was not only with the neoliberal influence analysis we found problems, but it was also occurring within the second part concerning the notion. In this case, it was not due to the lack

of data or the usefulness of it, but due to the wide range of different answers, we acquired from our online surveys.

Trying to put the feminist notion into different categories in the coding section has also been a big challenge, other surveys within this field, have divided the feminist notion into waves, as Ballouk (2016) in *"Fifty shades of Feminism"*, where the opinions of the contestants are seen into what fits to the characteristics of each wave (Ballouk, 2016;45). However, for what regards our study, we must acknowledge that our first-hand data must be more dense and extensive if we aim to establish concrete groups with the answers obtained. For the solution to this dilemma, we aim to focus more on the term of femvertising and all other second-hand data in the form of academic literature to analyze this matter. Further reflexions about this matter will be done in the correspondent limitations chapter for the methods of data gathering and data analysis.

5. Methods

The following section displays our choice of methods of data collection, followed by our choice concerning methods of data analysis, ending with an overview that comprehends the limitations within these methods.

5.1 Methods of Data Collection

For the development of this research, surveys were chosen as the most accurate method for collecting data. Thus, after the coding of the data acquired from the surveys, we were made aware of the need for secondary data in order to be able to conduct the best possible analysis and support our arguments more strongly.

Firstly it is important to remark the difference between survey research and survey as a method of data collection, also known as questionnaires. As De Vaus (2014) displays in his book *'Surveys in Social Research'*, survey research can entail a wide range of different methods, such as structured interviews, observation, content analysis, etc. The data gathered from these different methods could then take the form of a *'data grind'*, a table where both the cases (persons) and the variables (question and answers) are presented (Vaus, 2014; 3-4).

For this project, we made usage of questionnaires to acquired the data needed for the development of the analysis and consequently for being able to give an answer to the previously formulated research question. The reason behind choosing surveys was the idea of reaching out to as many women as possible, in order to make the outcomes of this research as reliable as possible. In total, eighty-eight women answered our questionnaire. We also acknowledge that the number of respondents is merely a sample of the real number of women around the globe, which opinions would have had the same importance and relevance since we stand with a generalized perspective.

Taking into consideration that our aim with this research is to identify the changes within the feminist notion the last decade, due to the influence neoliberalism has exercised over society, the number of answers gathered, matters. We aim to conclude with a general idea of the consequences feminism has suffered and therefore, the more, and more varied information, the better. It is also important to clarify that only women from Western countries (mainly Spain, Denmark, and Germany) have answered the questionnaires. As it was pointed out in the introduction of the project, all concepts concerning the research, such as feminism, have been defined in the specific geographic context of Western/developed countries, (see United Nations country classification 2014). This distinction has been made since we believe, many other sociological factors would have had to be taken into consideration, and we aimed to focus exclusively on the relationship between neoliberalism (present in most Western/developed countries) and feminism, omitting cultural and religious differences, for example.

The survey was structured as followed. Thirteen questions where asked, from which three were open-ended questions, made so that the respondents could type a personal opinion directly into a box (Bryman, 2016; 230). The remaining ten questions were closed and offered multiple choice answers. All the answers are automatically set in percentages by the program used to create the survey, Google Drive (*Google Analyse*), which makes the analysis process much more manageable and straightforward than if we had to do ourselves a data grind with all the information assembled.

At the introduction of our questionnaire, all respondents were made aware of their position as an anonymous participant and that they at any time we're able to not respond or to leave the questionnaire. They (respondents) were also informed of when the final research was going to be handed-in, who were developing it and lastly, the purpose of the questionnaire.

To extend our research, further than the previous exposed state of the art, we will treat second-hand data. Second-hand data will be seen as data that is not obtained directly from us researchers, we will, therefore, have to take into consideration validity and reliability. However, most importantly we must be critical concerning the sources used (Bryman, 2016;10).

5.1.1. Development of Online Surveys

The way of collecting data, as exposed in the section above, has been through online surveys. The survey was established by using *Google Analytics*, where the results of the survey can be analyzed collectively, counting with the total amount of respondents or individually, where each respondent's answers are listed.

All questions are constructed with the idea of gaining knowledge that can help us investigate the field of matter and followed, answer our research question. The questions of this survey are reflected in *Appendix 1, Online Survey*.

The survey itself is shaped upon 13 different questions, which were exposed to our respondents on social media platforms. Social media platforms, that entails *Facebook* and *Instagram*, which we found as the most used in our surroundings. Due to this choice, we can state that our samples are *non-probability samples*. Non-probability samples are those that appear as a result of insufficient time, resources and costs (Bryman, 2016;168).

The survey was shared many times on *Facebook* and have therefore reached a huge variation of people, more exactly, 88 persons. This amount of respondents has been collected over a period of one week, where afterward the surveys have been closed.

There has been obtained a big amount of data that will be looked deeper into when developing the method of data analysis chosen, which is coding.

All reflexions upon limitation will be exposed at the end of this chapter in, *5.3 Limitations of Methods*.

5.2 Method of Data Analysis

This section encloses the method of data analysis that we found more accurate, in order to obtain a well-developed analysis and discussion. Thereafter, it should be possible for us to respond to our research question and archive our pre-established aims.

Our analysis will be drawn into three different sections, one concerning the influence of neoliberal Capitalism over feminism, one comprehending the consciousness of Capitalization and the last one, concerning the notion of feminism. All these sections will be constructed upon our information obtained from the created *codes*.

We have decided to code the first-hand data, obtained from the online surveys since we believe it will enable us to gain a more concrete overview of the data acquired from all our respondents. After categorizing the data obtained, through the coding process, a content analysis of the final hole information will be possible.

According to Bryman (2016) coding is an essential step when developing a content analysis. Our coding in this research will comprehend a *Coding Schedule* and a *Coding Manual* (Bryman, 2016;293).

Coding Manual can be understood as a '*statement of instructions to coders that also includes all the possible categories for each dimension being coded*' (Ibid).

'It provides a list of all dimensions; the different categories subsumed under each dimension; the numbers (that is, codes) that correspond to each category; and guidance on what each dimension is concerned with and any factors that should be taken into account in deciding how to allocate any particular code to each dimension' (Ibid; 294).

Meaning with this, that the coding manual will allow us to have a guidance of categories to follow during the coding of the primary data. The categories and groups of the coding manual will comprehend a mixture of *field coded* and *post-coded* categories. Field code, refers to the development of categories during the development of the method of data collection, in this case, the online surveys. However, post-coded, means that the categories have been developed after gaining the first-hand data needed. Another way to establish categories, could be through pre-coded categories. Nonetheless, this way of coding has suffered many critiques and can be interpreted as non-objective caused by the already established pre-ideas and possible misconceptions.

The coding schedule is '*a form onto which all the data relating to an item being coded will be entered*' (Ibid; 293) In the coding schedule, all types of categories will be listed and thereafter all relevant information gained from the online surveys, will be classified.

The coding manual and the coding schedule, will both be available in the appendix section if needed for further studies (*Appendix 2 and Appendix 3*).

Firstly, online surveys were developed, followed by the establishment of different categories or *codes*. Each code will have a specific topic or theme, in order to separate the diverse ideas that the respondents have expressed during the surveys. The aim of these codes is to analyze the information in the analysis section, including percentages and concrete statements written by our respondents, in the online surveys.

The program used for the online survey (*Google Analyse*) had the feature of calculating the percentages of some of the codes and accordingly the number of respondents. Some of these percentages have been used in the analysis and coding schedule.

5.3. Limitations of Methods.

Every method of data collection and data analysis have some degree of limitations.

Within the method of data analysis, in this case, online surveys, we will have to look at factors such as gender, age, seriously, etc.

In the first-hand surveys, the respondents were anonymous, in order to give them a more comfortable environment to answer honestly and maybe more openly. The element of anonymity might lead to alteration in the seriousness of the participants and therefore, also false or incoherent answers.

Concerning the way of gaining respondents, as stated previously, we decided to "post" on different social media (*Facebook and Instagram*) the link to our survey since we believed it was the easiest way to obtain a bigger amount of respondents. From there, all respondents could go in and answer our survey in Google Analytics. The problem appears when taking into consideration the matter of representativeness. It is difficult to state that the 88 respondents we obtained, can represent a fraction of the Western population, now that we can clearly see how this spectrum is way too broad. Since we are third-semester students, our previous knowledge in relation to quantitative methods might not have been enough and we have therefore challenged our chosen method and thereby, this research.

According to Bryman (2016), many of these errors could have been avoided if we had developed more specific criteria for our respondents, which would lead us to a more narrowed research and thereby, more specific. Another process, that would have made our respondents more homogeneous in relation to the population being studied, could be by

changing the manner of reaching these respondents. Changing social media for *face-to-face* or *telephone questionnaires* would have made the sampling error decrease (Bryman, 2016; 171-173).

The online survey has been structured, as exposed earlier, both with closed and open questions. After the development of the survey, we as researchers noticed how it might be difficult to gather all the important information from the open questions. There has been acquired a big amount of information, however, while some are very relevant, others are even useless. The problem appears when building up the coding manual and coding schedule, this stage of the research is one of the most relevant parts of the project and can therefore also easily led to misguidance or misunderstanding of the primary data.

Within coding, the main limitation appears when constructing the coding manual and accordingly, the codes. Codes can be endless and there a thousand of different perspectives and ways of interpretation one single idea, depending on the relevant topic and the person deciding the codes (Bryman, 2016; 293). The application of *Google Analyse* has helped us by calculating automatically the percentages of the answered that have pre-established answers. We do not consider we have a problem with reliability since this program should be mathematically correct and trustworthy. For what regards the open question, we have developed different codes that are exposed in *Appendix 4*. To clarify our usage of this first-hand data in the following section, on some occasions we will use the number of respondents and in other the percentages.

However, as you will find in *Appendix 2- Answers to online surveys*, sometimes the respondents have not answered or skipped some questions, therefore the total of respondents of each question will not always be the 88 participants.

6. Analysis

The following analysis section is built upon all of the data gathered. The data from the online surveys, as previously explained, was set into a coding system in order to facilitate its analysis. Along with the information acquired from the surveys, neoliberal theory and the different concepts of feminism will be used to enrich the analysis. Last but not least, second-hand data will be used as supportive sources.

The analysis will be divided into two sections. The first section corresponds to the first influential relation being studied in the research, Capitalization as a consequence of a neoliberal system, and consequently the possible Capitalization of the feminist movement. These sections should, as well, corroborate the projects' hypothesis. As for the last section, this one will intend to give an answer to the research question which relates to the second relation, the shift in the notion of feminism due to its Capitalization.

6.1. Neoliberal Capitalist influence over feminism

This first section of the analysis studies the hypothesis of this research, meaning that, it aims to find out whether it can be verified or not, that Capitalization has been occurring within the last decade of the feminist movement due to the strong influence neoliberalism is gaining in all spheres of social, political and economic life. However, it will also entail many different reflexions that have been discovered during this research.

As it has been made clear in previous sections, we have been witnesses to many “*feminist*” campaigns of different clothing brands as for instance, the ones belonging to the Inditex group (see, marie-claire.es for example of feminist related products). Inditex, the big Spanish worldwide enterprise, is constituted by eight different brands (see Inditex.com), as for example the well-known clothing brands Zara, Stradivarius, etc..



Figure 2. Stradivarius T-shirt with the slogan ‘no es no’, which means ‘no, means no’.

Before starting this analysis, we remarked that both t-shirts, shown in this chapter, belong to the fashion brand, Stradivarius. Secondly, the reason behind setting *feminist* in between quotation marks, is that we are not sure about to what extent, these campaigns can be self-called feminist.

We will briefly explain the meaning of the particular slogan that is shown in Figure 2. '*No means no*'. It is possible to say that this concrete slogan, along with the story behind it, gained huge significance for the Spanish feminist movement after the incident occurring in July 2016, when an 18-year-old girl was raped by a group of 5 men during the San Fermin celebrations in Pamplona, Spain (see El Pais, *La Manada*). The case of this girl gained an extreme focus all over Spain and the Spanish media, we might even say that it became a symbol for the feminist movement.

This slogan goes further than women's empowerment, it concerns a human right principle. The right of being listened to, the right of not being raped. The brand Stradivarius took this topic and printed the slogan on their T-shirts, during times where this story was circulating on every news channel. What is debatable, is to which extent was Stradivarius trying to "*support*" this case or whether the increased attention of the case, could lead to an increase in the sells of their T-shirts.

Becky-Heather (2016) describes 5 principles that identify whether an item or campaign follows into the understanding of Femvertising (pg. 18-19). She argues that not only the definition of the term must be reflected upon the campaign, '*advertising that employs pro-female talent, messages, and imagery to empower women and girls*'(ibid, 18), but these 5 main characteristics should be common to most of these types of campaigns.

It can not be argued that the previous exposed T-shirt can easily be identified with an advertisement that aims to empower women, instead of sexualizing them or underestimate them. *No means no* empowers women to remember they should not be afraid to say no when they do not want something and reminds society of how terrible rapping, sexual assault, or sexual abuse is. Consequently, this T-shirt does fit into the definition of Femvertising as well as with the second principle pointed out, '*2) Messaging that is inherently pro-female*'(ibid).

The other 4 distinction points refer to the way in which women are portrayed through these campaigns. If they represent all forms of women's reality (race, size, religion, sexuality), if

they are not sexualized, if they go past the traditional stereotypes, and if they are portrayed in an authentic way (Ibid). From looking at this picture it is complicated to identify the other 4 characteristics just mentioned. Usually, these are easier to recognize in broader campaigns, with more than one example. However, it can be acknowledged that the model is not being sexualized in any form and she is being portrayed in a very neutral location and form (Figure 2).

From a general perspective, this picture could be classified as Femvertising, and consequently as a form of women empowerment. We aim to critically look at Femvertising and whether women's empowerment is the only outcome acquired from these campaigns. Hereunder, commodity feminism was chosen to bring light to this issue, as it is a theory critical with these types of activity.

Yes, this T-shirt is aiming to empower women, or at least that is what the company behind it intended to make us, as consumers believe. But how can it be considered feminist supportive, to make use of such a strong value-loaded slogan, that refers to non-consenting sexual abuse, in a commodity which aim is no other than the one of making profitability for the company behind it?



Figure 3. T-shirt from Stradivarius with feminist slogans.

Commodity feminism and neoliberalism will be used to analyze the two images presented above (Figures 2 and 3). Firstly, it is important to point that it is the own brand that classifies their items as feminists, by doing this, they are building upon a crowd-pleasing topic that will ensure the support of the consumerist society (Menendez, 2019; 91). Furthermore, they are making use, as stated before, of strong feminist principles. The previous T-shirt sought to reflect against the sexual abuse some women suffer. These other two t-shirts expose the other side of the usage of feminist slogans, a side that can be interpreted as more positive and encouraging. These T-shirts' purpose can be looked at as an initiator to empower women in their daily life, such as to influence what to wear (very suitable coming from a clothing brand).

Neoliberalism claims that market values should be extended to all types of institutions and forms of social life (Brown, 2005), including the feminist movement and therefore, the feminist principles. These market values, entail no more than the cast of every human, social or political activity into terms of profitability, meaning that, every decision made from the government or in this case, an enterprise, will be exposed to a set of calculous and measurements (ibid). As we were made aware of, Inditex takes in the neoliberal market rationality and finds a way in which it supports a highly socially important issue, feminism, casting it in terms of profitability. Inditex represents the neoliberal paradigm. It does not leave aside important social matters as feminism and rapping, but it makes use of it in order to achieve an economic benefit. It turns feminism into a commodity. *'Equal inequality for all'* says neoliberalism when referring to the wide range of social policy it covers (Brown, 2005). If we follow this approach, neoliberalism does not care about the roots of feminism, it does not worry about its fight, but it is willing to support the movement as long as profit is gained from it. This represents the definition of Capitalization previously given.

'Neoliberalism produces rational actors and imposes a market rationale for decision making in all spheres'. Neoliberalism has influenced Inditex's policies and decisions, to the extent of creating campaigns under the branding of Femvertising; making use of the feminist principles with the purpose of increasing sales. Here is where we ask ourselves the following question. We have been able to identify the use of feminism for economical purposes, but is this, in any form, corrupting the feminist principles being used?

Commodity feminism would argue that yes, the feminist principles get corrupted when using them for economical purposes. Goldman et al. (1991) would describe it as the depoliticization

of the movement, the forgetfulness of the core values of feminism. Furthermore, scholar Brown (2005) would agree on this topic as well, as she characterizes neoliberalism's social policy strategy as having to be beneficial for business and ignores the roots of the matter in issue.

We could be more critical, and not categorize the commercialization of products with feminist slogans as Capitalization. In order to look at these campaigns as not products of Capitalization, no economic benefit should be involved. Accordingly, no profit would have been acquired from the feminist ideas used, meaning that, the brands had managed not to follow into the market's rationality. The rationality that primarily governs around the globe and claims that every human action should be formed according to the aim of gaining of economical benefits (Brown, 2005).

Not falling into the neoliberal rationality, it is possible if in this case, Inditex had used the total of the benefits gathered through the selling of these T-shirts, to foundations, organizations or projects, that for example support women in its many variant forms of doing so. Unfortunately, this is not the case of Inditex and very probable of the many other big multinational corporations that commercialize with feminist goods.

We do not aim to state that Inditex does not engage with social injustices, it is proven they do, as they write on their website as well. However, the objective of this analysis was to look into whether neoliberalism had found a way to introduce its rationality within this multinational enterprise and consequently in the feminist movement.

We believe that it was important to get women's opinions on this matter as well. After all, it is women who might notice this phenomenon happening, and correlated, the changes it involves. It is women, the ones targeted to be the potential buyers of these T-shirts. Therefore, the online survey, as stated before, entailed a set of questions referring to the phenomenon that is being analyzed, Capitalization.

Interestingly, 71,6 % of the respondents had answered NO to the question; *Have you seen any of these T-shirts before? (The pictures exposed on this chapter, were used as a reference for this survey question) (Appendix 4)*. We believe that the reason behind this result is the confusion on whether we were only referring to the three specific T-shirts shown or to any other "feminist" relatable product. However, even though the majority of the respondents had not seen these T-shirts, they still all had an opinion about them. Following the question

exposed above, we asked them about their opinion towards the aim they thought these T-shirts had when being commercialized. We gave them four options, including the option of *Other*, which only two participants (2,3 %), choose. As for the other three, we classified the answers, as it can be seen in the coding schedule, into consciousness or not of Capitalization. 23,7 % of the participants would be classified, as not conscious of Capitalization, since their answer was that the T-shirts previously exposed were aimed to support the feminist movement (*Appendix 4*). However, we acknowledge our classification can be argued, thus, we interpret the answer as they are not critically looking at the issue. As for the other 73,8 %, they show a more critical view of the matter, choosing the answers *good marketing and publicity* or *another income source*. Both these answers were thought to reflect a critical perspective over the issue, enlightening to what extent women are being critical with what they are offered, and what they are told feminism is (*Appendix 4*).

However, even if we took into consideration the percentages of respondents that see the campaigns as ‘pro-feminist’, a 93,2 % of the respondents, agreed on the idea that Western enterprises are taking advantage of the feminist movement in order to gain profit (*Appendix 4*). It seems like it is no secret, companies take advantage of anything that will procure them with an increase in their income.

What we bring up for debate, is the contradiction resulting caused by the exposed above arguments. How come, these women, that agreed on the fact that companies are making usage of feminism for economical interests, can still state that these campaigns are being feminist supportive. This situation can be explained as the depoliticization of feminism, Goldman et al. (1991) pointed out on their work. For these women feminism is not about politics any longer, instead, they show to believe that feminism can be summarized to a set of slogans imprinted in T-shirts, as these T-shirts entail the core feminist principles, principles of self-empowerment and celebration. Following Rottenberg (2013) work, these women are disavowing the reason behind the existence of feminism, and as we will look deeper into in the next chapter, these women might be falling into the understanding of neoliberal feminism.

For the aforementioned reasons, we believe that it is of interest to go a little deeper into some of the quotations that we have seen our respondents gave in the online surveys: ‘*Well, most people try to make money of most things, and feminism isn’t the only movement that has been*

used to gain or make more money' (Appendix 2, question 8). Another example of this perception could be *'Like everything today, we live in a Capitalistic world, where whenever there is a business opportunity it will be taken'* or lastly, as for example, the sentence *'feminism develops into a product'* (Appendix 2, question 8). These quotations are a result of the question *In relationship to the previous question (Western enterprises benefiting from feminism), how does this affect the feminist principle?*. These exposed quotations together can form what is understood as the stereotyped and as well, many times, the accepted understanding of Capitalism. Out of the 60 answers acquired from this question, we classified 75% of the answers as *Negative effect*, meaning that, 75% viewed the commercialization of feminist products are harmful to the feminist principles (Appendix 4). *It takes attention away from the real issue, as calling yourself a feminist and wearing these T-shirts become a fashion statement rather than actually working on inequality which still exists even in the most developed countries* (Appendix 2). Before moving forward, it is important to remark that not only 25% of the respondents' opinions were neutral or positive towards the commercialization of feminist ideas, but 28 participants did not even respond to this question (Appendix 4).

The negative cognition towards Capitalism has been shown to be quite general within many of the respondents. Some of the aspects that can be argued in regards to statements as those previously exposed, is the negative cognition that Capitalism and correlated, Capitalization has acquired. One aspect that is easily related to Capitalism is greed. As the scholar Gilbert(2018) argues, greed might be seen as the motivation of people that makes a profit, what is not that much debated is the idea that greed is not only the factor that makes people gain economic benefit but it is also the factor that makes these people, invent, invest, develop, distribute and sell products. Gilbert (2008) was interestingly found when researching about Capitalism, as an result of the debated issue of the negative cognition of Capitalism. This author's work, entail a dense study regarding the influence that an anti capitalistic society would have over aspects such as culture, art or anthropology.

Over social media and within society, there are appearing many anti-Capitalist movements, ideas, and debates. Anti-capitalism has roughly been understood as the opposition to the economic system of Capitalism (Gilbert, 2018). Something that is questionable is how society would move forward without Capitalism or even without greed?

To answer this hypothetical question, we would need to elaborate on a much more complex study. What can be stated is that Capitalism undoubtedly makes people want to maximize profitability which must entail an encouragement for maximizing the evolution of production and innovation. In this research, one of the main aspects in focus has been neoliberalism and neoliberal capitalism, but as stated by Gilbert (2008;107) ‘(...) *the very modern idea of culture has emerged as a critique of Capitalism*’. Consequently, we question whether a modern idea of feminism will, for instance, emerge as a critique of Neoliberal Capitalism.

To conclude this reflexion, what we aim to state is that during this research, neoliberal Capitalism has been viewed from an economic perspective, as an approach that is profit-seeking, which might have entailed some underlying negative cognition. But if we look at the positive aspects, neoliberalism might have influenced the development that we have experienced in a society in the last decades, exactly caused by the self-interested character that this approach entails.

6.1.1 Part Conclusion

Before moving forward to the rest of the analysis we will summarize the main ideas brought up during the previous chapter.

Firstly, we identified the exposed clothing campaigns as products of Femvertising, advertisement strategy that aims to empower women. Nonetheless, through the concept of commodity feminism and its relation with the neoliberal theory, we could identify other consequences these campaigns have had over feminism. Using the answers from the surveys we found out that the majority of the participants agreed on the idea that big enterprises are making usage of the feminist principles to increase their income and portray a better image of themselves. When making usage of neoliberalism and commodity feminism to look at these campaigns, it could be discussed that feminist principles were being depoliticized and losing its importance. Some of the participants would show an understanding and a critical view of this issue, arguing the dangerousness of this usages of the feminist principles. However, there were also women who were capable of acknowledging positive points from these campaigns, such as the protagonism feminism was gaining in all aspects of life, bringing feminism out to more individuals. Thus, the way in which it is done can be argued as not to be the most accurate for such a meaningful movement.

These two argumentations, the positive and negative aspects of the Capitalization of the feminist movement, can be used as well to answer to one of the questions exposed during the development of the analysis; *are the feminist principles being corrupted?*

Yes, the feminist principles are being corrupted when used for these types of campaigns. Therefore, it could be said, that the feminist principles get corrupted when what they mean and represent becomes less important than the profit they make. Who or what is behind this corruption can be answer through the neoliberal market rationality. Which has given these big enterprises the recipe on how how to cast everything in terms of economic profitability while pleasing society. This whole conclusion is a good example, of the never-ending paradox, of how to find the balance between the intentions of gaining profit and correlated, falling into the influence of the neoliberal rationality, and the on the other side try to prevail the meaning of, in this case, the feminist principles regardless of the present political or economic system. How the feminist principles get corrupted is something we hope to gain an answer to in the next analysis chapter, in order to look at whether the feminist notion has been altered or not due to the Capitalization of the feminist movement.

6.2 The feminist notion

The second section of the analysis will encompass and aim to answer the following two questions; How are the feminist principles corrupted?, and consequently, how does this affect the feminist notion?.

The main tools that will be used for this chapter will be the first-hand data obtained from the questionnaires, and the two different conceptualizations of feminism we have worked during the development of this project. On one hand, the definition of neoliberal feminism, or as scholar Prügl (2015) prefers to cast it; the neoliberalization of the feminist concept. On the other hand, what we, as researchers, classified in the introduction of this research, as our perception of the concept of feminism, given by Varela (2008) as a political and social movement that aims to change the established gender relations.

Certainly, separating and evaluating the notion of feminism is a complicated task and therefore it has also supposed a challenge during this research. The first challenge showed up at the very beginning of the research, as we could not find a consensus or general definition

of feminism which we could work with. Therefore, the sentence, *feminism will be studied as something changeable*, and all its similar variants, have been so present in this project, since a great number of the scholars agree to characterize feminism and feminist theory this way.

We felt Varela's (2008) definition of feminism embodied what we considered the most important aspects of what characterizes the feminist movement;

1. A social and political movement of **justice**, that aims to challenge the established order that is creating inequality.
2. The sex you are biologically born with, does not define your future.
3. Feminism is an **engine**, that transforms, day by day, the established relationships between men and women.

The feminist movement is a collective movement, that seeks to bring justice to all forms of gender inequality. Moreover, it is a non-stop machine that works to transform those daily life situations in which men and women are not being allowed to be themselves. Feminism does seek for gender equality, but it is also much more.

This understanding of feminism could be also used for many other social and political movements, entailing for instance race or sexuality. These can all be seen as movements for justice and equality (*no matter its form*), that seeks to change what has been established to be "normal" within society's stereotypes.

The idea with some of the questions of the survey, was to gain an overall view of how women define feminism, and therefore we asked the following open question; *What is your idea of feminism?* Where, despite obtaining many different and contradicting answers, we have also gained some interesting results. Thus, we can acknowledge it was a mistake leaving this question as open, since the coding and the results would have been much more concrete if the respondents have had multiple answers to choose between.

Nevertheless, we have coded the results as following; 47 of the respondents answered that feminism is about seeking equal rights between genders. These forty seven answers were formulated in different ways, some, were more developed, mentioning some of the characteristics we identify with a critical view of what feminism is, including ideas as the following ones; *the act of freeing women, Women supporting each other; Make awareness of the lack of visibility, equality, recognition of women in society; social, political and economic*

equality women and men (Appendix 2). However, we found irrelevant coding them into smaller groups, and therefore the 47 answers will be analyzed mutually. (*Appendix 4*).

Herewith, the expression, equality between men and woman, or equality between genders is not an intrinsically part of the definition given by Varela (2008). What happens is that, even acknowledging the general consensus there is shown to be when relating equal right to feminism, scholar Rottenberg (2016) identifies *equality* as a key liberal term, alongside with others such as, *opportunities* and *free choice* (Ibid; 4). For neoliberal feminism, the problem of gender inequality becomes the core of the collective movement, while terms of social justice are reformulated into individual and personal affairs (Ibid).

What we can conclude, from the results acquired from question number ten, is that the generalized view of feminism, in the present, is considerably influenced by the neoliberal version of feminism. Neoliberal feminism adopts the meaningfulness of equal rights, in order not to lose the essence of feminism. Within this new version, the individualization of the empowerment of women can even be interpreted as a competition between women. This idea reminds us of some of the neoliberal rationality principles. *'Neoliberalism does not simply assume that all aspects of social, cultural, and political life can be reduced to such a calculus (profitability); rather, it develops institutional practices and rewards for enacting this vision'*(Brown, 2005). Meaning that, woman will be rewarded in our present society, if they are able to cast their fight and life into calculus of profitability, creating a *'feminist subject who is not only individualized but entrepreneurial in the sense that she is oriented towards optimizing her resources [...], while calibrating a felicitous work-family balance becomes her main task.'*(Rottenberg, 2016). *'It (neoliberal feminism) engages women and men in business, academia, and government, and speaks a new language of gender balance and equality as an asset for business and economic development'* (Prügl, 2015).

All these quotations, from the main scholars used in this research, reinforce the conclusion exposed above. The neoliberalization of feminism has occurred, and many women have been influenced by it. When looking at the twenty-two remaining answers, from question number ten, ten of them involved an irrelevant answer to the research (*Appendix 4*). Lastly, the final twelve answers were the first contact we had with the issue we were about to find out about with the next two questions of the survey. Most of these twelve answers were concerning a

critical view of feminism, but interpreted in different terms than the other example we gave previously.

As we were made aware of these twelve answers were the first taste of the issue. To the following question, *How do you think feminism is being portrayed?* two different type of answers were offered. The first option was answered by 48,5% of the participants and it said, *“like the previous definition I gave”*, meaning that, they thought feminism was being portrayed the same way as they had previously defined. The other option was an open answer, where respondents could answer what they thought was most appropriate. With this, we intended to see whether woman themselves, though feminism was being used wrongly caused by Capitalism. Interestingly, it was a very different perspective these women had. We coded the open answers as *Radical, Neoliberal, or The Movement is Misunderstood*.

The percentages were exposed as followed; 35,7% though feminism was being portrayed as a radical movement, meaning that, women wanted to be superior, have more rights, or feminism was a movement that portrayed hate against men (*Appendix 4*). These answers did not get us completely by surprise, since it is a topic we were aware of being present in the present feminist debate, nevertheless, we were amused to see the number of participants that shared this idea. But if we go back, and take a look at the numbers of respondents whose understanding of feminism were influenced by neoliberal feminism, 47 respondents, and the amount of participants that though feminism was taking a radical turn, 25, maybe, here, the neoliberal rationality had also played a role. However, as stated previously, this is a topic that we are not able to study deeper due to the lack of tools, knowledge and resources.

Moreover, 8,5% of the participants answered that the movement was being portrayed too liberal, as with the previously mentioned clothing campaigns (*Appendix 4*). Finally, even though it is only 7,1%, 5 participants were able to acknowledge how feminism is being misunderstood as too “radical” or too “liberal” depending on the source you look at (*Appendix 4*). *‘Depending on the source. Its representation goes from extreme to extreme’* (*Appendix 2, question 8*).

The analysis of this question, made us question some ideas, mainly concerning what is happening with the feminist movement. How come, that the feminist movement can be divided into so many different understandings?.

Another way of identifying the neoliberal influence within the feminist movement can be by asking the participants, *How did you first learn about feminism?*. In this question, there was the possibility to answer *Family, friends or school; Through publicity, marketing, and social media; public or political debates* or *learned through own research*. Lastly, the participants had the possibility to add their own answer as an open question would allow. With this question we aimed to look at what number of participants, that might have gained their knowledge of feminism throughout media or publicity, two platforms commonly used by neoliberalism (Goldman et al, 1991). Thus, only 18,4% choose this option (*Appendix 4*). 42,5% of respondents plus 4 individual respondents agreed that they did learn about the matter from family, friends or school (*Appendix 2*), which leads us to think that there is still a prevalence of the education through family, friends, and acquaintances, leaving neoliberalism influences in a second place.

This section is aiming to look into the feminist notion. Therefore we start it by exposing what we consider the three main principles of the feminist movement. These three principles collectively should form a notion of feminism. The same process is conducted with neoliberal feminism. This type of feminism is built upon a set of principles, and together they should form another type of notion. Consequently, we aspired to gain enough knowledge to be able to identify the differences within each notion. To recall the understanding of notion for this project, we use the definition of *notion of experience* given by Mulinari (1999) where notion is not only seen as the interpretation of one individual' experience, but rather as the collective understanding of a matter, in the case of this research, women' collective understanding of feminism. It can be argued that if we state that the notion is something collective, the interpretation of the feminist notion should not shift due the transmission through one generation to another, from one friend to another or from teacher to student, for example. The change takes place when we bear in mind the political, social or economic context of a specific historical frame. An example, for instance, is the work exposed by Ann E. Cudd and Nancy Holmstrom (2011) where the authors argue the situation of women and how it has developed during the past generation, evolving from the women that were home taking care of the children and house, to the strong women we see today that have fought for a well-deserved place in all societies spectrums. More importantly, gaining a place in the labor market.

Consequently, we claim our inability to formulate neither the notion of feminism in previous years, nor the one there is now, due to the lack of data. Furthermore, after learning about the different understandings that exist within feminism, we really doubt on the possibility of framing a definition of the notion of feminism, regardless of the time and context.

Despite our inability to formulate an understanding of the feminist notion, and consequently identify a shift in it. We are able to identify the core differences between the two understandings of feminism previously exposed and the implications these have had over the movement. Accordingly, we are also able to answer the question crafted in the previous chapter; *How do the feminist principles get corrupted?*

6.2.1 Part Conclusion

In this section of the analysis we have investigated the relation between the Capitalization of the feminist movement and consequently the shift in its notion. As it has been shown, we have primarily made usage of the answers acquired from the survey, in order to include women's experiences in the analysis.

The first worth-mentioning finding we reached out to, was the generalised understanding of feminism, as the fight for equal rights between men and women. This cognition was identified as neoliberal, regardless of the disagreement, this classification can entail. The characterization of feminism as a fight for equal rights, is a product of the neoliberalization of the feminist movement, as it omits many other core principles, like the ones exposed by Varela (2008). Furthermore, making usage of the concept of neoliberal feminism we identified this typification of feminism as individual, meaning that, the neoliberalization of feminism has individualized the movement casting the empowerment of women as a calculus of profit maximization.

This creates the main distinguishment between the two understandings of feminism previously exposed. While Varela (2008) defines feminism as a collective movement that aims to change what is established, neoliberal feminism is defined as a movement formed by individuals that are influenced by a market rationality that enhances them to grow, not as humans (women), but as products of a system.

Consequently, we could say that the corruption of the feminist principles starts when these are cast as individual aims and not collective ones. Firstly, the conceptualization of feminism

as a political and social movement, gets exchanged with an understanding of feminism as an individual exercise of superation. Consequently, the movement stops seeking to please women's needs, and instead, it aims to please the markets necessities.

Subsequently, we will proceed to the conclusion of the research, where the reflexions exposed in the two part-conclusions will be used to reflect upon the hypothesis and accordingly, formulate an answer for the research question.

7. Conclusion

This section will show the summarized conclusions and reflexions obtained after the development of this research.

Mainly, what we aimed with this research was to verify the established hypothesis; the fourth wave of feminism is the one being Capitalized, and thereafter, answer our research question; *How has the Capitalization of the feminist movement affected the notion of feminism within the fourth wave of feminism (last decade)?*

After the development of the first section of the analysis, we can conclude that we have successfully verified our hypothesis. The display of feminism in terms of profitability was shown to have happened within multinational enterprises as Inditex. This is understood as the Capitalization of the feminism, due to the influence of the neoliberal rationality, which entail the relation draw to form the hypothesis (*Figure 1*). Being able to verify the hypothesis also entails a success in regards to our philosophical approach, positivism. Since we stand with a positivistic approach, the aim should be to verify our hypothesis and thereby, establish a general law. However, being critical and self-reflective, we must admit that caused mainly by the limitations of sampling during the development of the online surveys, we are not capable of using this research as the basis for a general overview. Something that we want to highlight is the possibility to adapt that this research can have to other social movements if developed more precisely and more extended. As for us, as researchers, we feel that the feminist movement has been the one closest to us and the one affecting our daily lives, therefore also the focus of this research. However, this project could easily be transformed into a research that focuses on the Capitalization of any social movement, concerning race, religion, sexuality, etc.

The hypothesis has been possible to verify through the analysis of questions taken from our online surveys, the analysis of second hand data as for instance, Inditex “*feminist*” T-shirts with the concepts of commodity feminism and femvertising and the correlated usage of neoliberalism theory. Furthermore, we have managed to reflect some interesting points, as for example how Capitalism and the neoliberal rationality of profitability, are interpreted with a negative cognition and that this might led to a misunderstanding within the feminist movement, causing a division into different extremes. This issue, was also brought up in the second chapter of the analysis, concerning the opinion of some respondents. These, understand the portrayal of feminism as too radical or extreme. As well, we can acknowledge that some participants also thought feminism was being portrayed as a product, too liberal. This reflexion was already briefly mentioned in the analysis chapter, however we bring it up again since we consider it to be relevant and interesting to investigate.

Nowadays, the feminist movement has experience a huge growth but, consequently it has suffered from inside division. It is not only possible to see from the answers obtained from the surveys, but also from the disconcensous there is concerning what feminism is inside academia. We view this situation with sadness, as we do not believe this separation within the movement is beneficial for feminism, and we question the reason why this division and consequent, misunderstanding is happening.

Hereof, in what refers to the research question, it is possible to answer it along with the answer given in section two, to the question; how has feminism been corrupted?

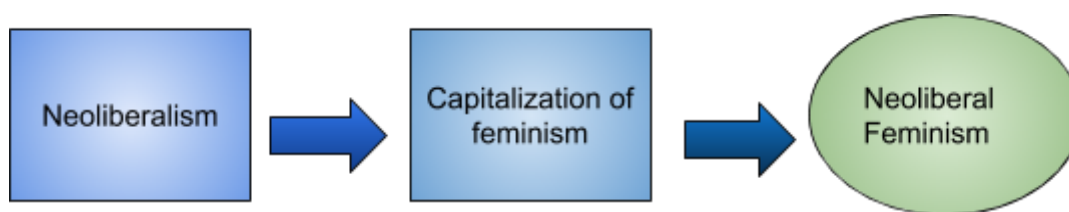


Figure 4. Conclusive research diagram

In order to answer the research question, *How has the Capitalization of the feminist movement affected the notion of feminism within the fourth wave of feminism (last decade)?*,

we have studied during the second section of the analysis, the differences between what we perceive as two different cognitions of feminism. On one hand, we have the definition of feminism given by Varela(2008) and on the other hand the one given by scholars, Rottenberg and Prügl, belonging to the neoliberal feminism understanding. Most of the participants from the survey follow into the second understanding exposed, which can lead us to think that neoliberalist understanding of feminism is gaining importance. As stated in earlier sections, there is a change in the individualistic features of the core principles of feminism between these two approaches toward feminism. These could be said to be, the changes in the notion of feminism caused by its Capitalization. To clarify, the new understanding appearing as neoliberal feminism, was introduced in early stages of this project but merely as a concept that could be used as a tool to investigate the matter studied. After the development of this research, we can affirm that neoliberal feminism gives us the tools to understand the changes happening in the feminist notion and thereby, to answer our research question.

To conclude, the presence of neoliberalism, as a form of governmentality, has caused the Capitalization of the feminist principles. The way in which this has affected the feminist movement and its notion, is no other than by neoliberalizing it. Casting women's empowerment in terms of benefits for the markets, individualising the movement and forgetting about some of the main core principles.

We do not consider that the neoliberal feminist ideas, represents how the collective notion of feminism should be, due to the paradox this entails. And therefore, we feel it challenges the future of the feminist movement.

Appendix

- *Appendix 1- Online Survey*
- *Appendix 2- Answers from online survey*
- *Appendix 3-Coding Manual*
- *Appendix 4- Coding Schedule*
- *Appendix 5- Abstract*

Figure Sources

- *Frontpage Collage: awesomebrooklyn.com, walmart.com, marieclaire.com, conmibandera.es, amazon.com, teepublic.com, clubmalasmadres.es, globedia.com*
- *Figure 1: Self made \$*
- *Figure 2: Marie-claire.com*
- *Figure 3: Marie-claire.com*
- *Figure 4: Self made*

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