Use and Consumption of Social Networks in the Academic and Social Environment of Administration Students at the "Universidad Colegio Mayor De Cundinamarca, Bogotá".

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Abstract

Social networks have become a fundamental part of everyday life, influencing multiple areas, especially in the academic and social spheres. Its use has grown exponentially, regardless of age, transforming the way people interact and access information. The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of the use and consumption of social networks on the students of Administration at the Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, evaluating the level of control that this exerts on them and its influence on academic and social dynamics. Using a mixed-approach methodology, combining surveys and interviews with statistical data analysis, we examine the relationship between time of use, technology dependence and the effects on academic performance and interpersonal relationships. The results show that, although social networks facilitate communication and access to academic information, their inappropriate use can generate distractions, affect productivity and contribute to the depersonalization of interactions. This study concludes that it is essential to encourage a conscious and regulated use of social networks, promoting strategies to balance their impact on the academic and social development of students. In addition, it highlights the importance of generating institutional policies that help guide young people in building responsible digital habits.

Keywords: *Social Networks, University Students, Academic Impact, Social Interaction, Digital Consumption.*

Introduction

Today, social networks have revolutionized the way individuals interact, access information and build their communication networks. Their impact on higher education is undeniable, as students use these platforms not only for entertainment and socializing, but also as tools for learning and academic collaboration. The intensive use of social networks affects almost all aspects of social life such as health, education and work relationships are just a few of these parts (Acar & Gülnar, 2023). The growing access to smartphones and the ease of connectivity have driven the expansion of social media, solidifying it as a fundamental medium for society (Sadri et al., 2019). The use of social networks in the university environment has allowed new forms of access to knowledge, the creation of academic communities and the dissemination of educational content. Over the last ten years, social interaction has been the main use of social networks (Anzano-Oto et al., 2023). Social networks have changed communication, allowing young people to interact and share information in their personal, professional and educational lives, providing unprecedented opportunities for connection and learning (Astudillo Torres, 2023).

In the context of business administration, social networks have acquired particular relevance due to their role in information management, corporate communication, digital marketing and professional networking. The identification and monitoring of communities in dynamic networks is essential for in-depth analysis of social interactions in digital environments, enabling a better understanding of the underlying dynamics in online social networking platforms (Mazza et al., 2023).

Students in the business administration program often use platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to not only connect with peers and faculty, but also to develop business skills and access job opportunities. In addition, online social networks (OSNs) have become the predominant image transmission channels in the modern era (Liu et al., 2023). Likewise, the ease with which information is

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shared through these platforms has transformed the dynamics of learning processes and the way in which students access academic and professional material. It is a fact that social networks have become a fundamental part of the everyday life of university students, influencing their study habits, communication and academic interaction (Marinković, 2023). Although social networks offer multiple benefits, their excessive use can generate negative impacts on the university population. Several studies have shown that time spent on these platforms can affect academic performance, reducing concentration, productivity and encouraging procrastination. It is still unknown how daily interactions on social networks and perceptions about communication on these platforms may influence users' emotional reactions, affecting their well-being and behavior in academic and social settings (Lindberg et al., 2023). Also, constant consumption of digital content can affect the ability to concentrate and retain information, which can negatively impact students' academic performance. Social networks are shaped by the interaction of strong and weak ties, which influence the dynamics of social relationships and individual and group behavior, aspects that can be analyzed through social network analysis (Zhu et al., 2023; Strawbridge, 2023).

On the other hand, the use of social networks in university environments is also influenced by factors such as accessibility to technological devices, digital culture and teaching strategies adopted by educational institutions, including having experts in different subjects. In a social network, experts can share their opinions and communicate with each other (Wang et al., 2023).

In the specific case of the Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, there are no recent studies that analyze the impact of the use of social networks on business administration students. This research seeks to fill that gap through a detailed analysis of social network consumption patterns in this population, exploring their relationship with academic performance and social interactions. It is hoped that the results of this study will offer valuable insights for implementing strategies to promote a balanced and beneficial use of social networks in the university environment.

The research is framed within the growing need to understand how digital technologies influence higher education and the training of future professionals. The integration of social networks in academic environments can represent an opportunity to improve teaching and learning, as long as its possible negative effects are properly managed.

Materials and Methods

The present study focuses on the students of the Faculty of Administration and Economics of the Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, who, due to their condition as students, are immersed in various social and academic circles where the use of social networks and the Internet plays a central role. These platforms have become a key source of information and communication, facilitating both learning and social interaction.

Study Participants

The target population of this study consisted of 1,483 students of the business administration program of the faculty of administration and economics of the Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca. The sample for this research was selected based on the students' perception of the consumption of social networks, the benefits they bring to their academic training and the risks associated with their use. For the collection of information, structured surveys with key questions were used to analyze the object of study.

Sample Characteristics

The sample was composed of students from the School of Administration and Economics of the Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, with the following demographic characteristics:

- Age: Between 18 and 35 years old.

- Academic level: Between first and eighth semester.

- Gender: Men, women and any other gender identity.

- Use of social networks in academic and personal settings.

The sample size was determined using the finite population formula:

$$n = \frac{N*Z^2*p*q}{e^2*(N-1)+Z^2*p*q}$$

Study Organization

This study is quantitative in approach and employs a descriptive correlational method design, the objective of which is to determine the existence or not of a relationship between certain variables and to measure the magnitude of this relationship. Descriptive research aims to describe some fundamental characteristics of homogeneous sets of phenomena, using systematic criteria that make it possible to establish the structure or behavior of the phenomena under study, providing information that is systematic and comparable with that from other sources (Guevara Albán et al., 2020). The research uses the correlational approach, this type of study aims to know the relationship or degree of association that exists between two or more concepts, categories or variables in a particular sample or context (Hernández, et al., 2014).

Data Collection Technique

The sampling technique involved applying an instrument after determining the sample size using a formula, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The total sampling assumed a success probability of 0.5 and a failure probability of 0.5, resulting in a final sample of 306 students from the business administration program.

Instruments

The instrument used in this research consisted of ten (10) questions, as shown in Table 1. It was structured with the objective of analyzing the use of social media and the perception of cybersecurity among the participants. The survey includes questions related to the frequency and purpose of social media use, its application in the academic field, the reliability of online information sources, and knowledge of cyber risks. Additionally, it explores exposure to cybercrime and the precautionary measures taken to mitigate these risks. The collected information will help to understand the respondents' digital habits and their level of awareness regarding online security.

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Table 1. Data Collection Instrument

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No.	Question	Response options
1	Do you use any of the following social networks?	Facebook / Instagram Twitter University website
2	How much time per week do you spend using these networks?	1 hour / between 2 and 10 hours More than 10 hours / Do not use
3	What is the main reason you use social networks?	Academic Entertainment / Professional Socialize /Other
4	Do you consider that the use you make of social networks is adequate?	YES / NO

| 5	In classes do you use social networks or the Internet to facilitate access to information?	YES / NO
6	Do you believe that the sources of information on the Internet are completely reliable?	YES / NO
7	If you answered "yes" in the previous question, please indicate which source of information you consider reliable:	
8	Are you aware of the cyber risks to which people are exposed today?	YES / NO
9	Have you ever been a victim of any of the following cybercrimes?	Computer sabotage Identity Theft / Cyber Harassment Bank fraud / Other, which one?
10	Do you take any precautions when using social networks and the Internet to avoid cybercrime?	YES, Which one?: _____ No

Source: Authors (2023)

Results

The data obtained from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to identify trends in the use and consumption of social networks among students. The results allow us to evaluate both the benefits and risks associated with these platforms in the academic and social spheres.

Implications of Social Networking

Figure 1 reveals the respondents' preferences regarding the use of social networks, this usage pattern reflects the strong presence of commercial social networks in the digital life of the surveyed students.

Figure 1. Social Network Used By Students
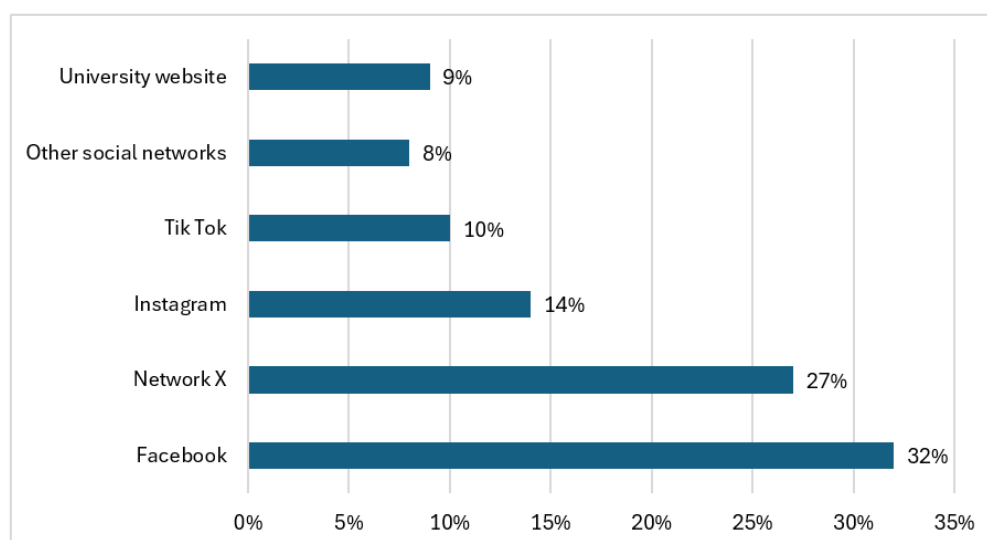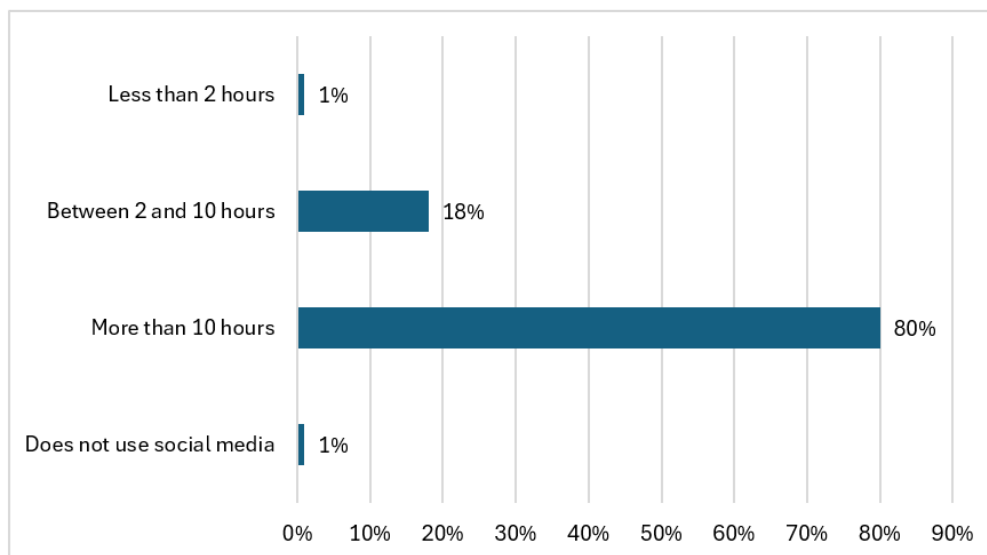

Source: Authors (2023)

The predominance of Facebook (32%) may be attributed to its versatility, as it facilitates not only social interaction but also access to news, study groups, and educational content. This suggests that users perceive the platform as a balance between entertainment and information. The X network, with 27%, maintains a strong presence, likely due to its ability to rapidly disseminate information and enable real-time interaction.

Its use may be associated with seeking news, academic trends, or professional discussions. On the other hand, Instagram, at 14%, shows a lower preference, possibly due to its visual and entertainment-driven nature, making it less commonly used for academic or professional purposes. However, its impact on communication and marketing remains significant. Lastly, the university website, with only 9%, suggests that students and other users do not consider it their primary source of information. This could be attributed to factors such as infrequent updates, a less engaging design compared to commercial social networks, or a preference for obtaining academic information through other digital channels. Given this scenario, it is crucial for universities and other educational institutions to enhance their social media presence to improve the dissemination of academic and administrative information. Integrating digital communication strategies on platforms like Facebook and Instagram could increase student engagement and accessibility to relevant content.

Analysis of Social Media Usage Time

Figure 2 shows that a significant majority of surveyed students spend more than 10 hours per week on social media, indicating a high level of digital immersion. This finding suggests that social media is not only used for recreational purposes but may also play a fundamental role in users' daily lives, whether for communication, information access, or even academic and professional activities.

Figure 2. Time Spent on Social Networks in the Week
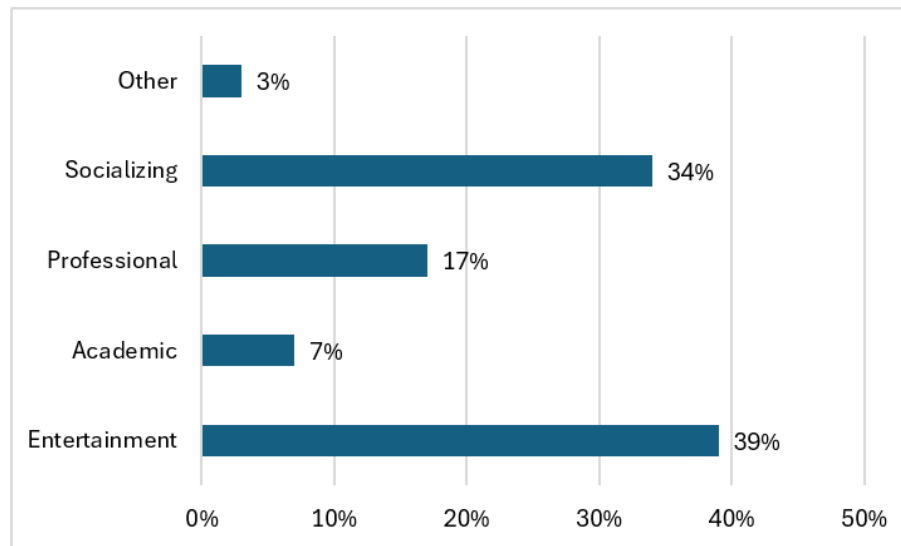

Source: Authors (2023)

The percentage of users who spend between 2 and 10 hours per week on social media is significantly lower, reflecting a group with more moderate usage, possibly balancing their time with other activities. However, it is notable that there are virtually no responses in the category of less than 2 hours per week or from those who do not use social media at all. This highlights the current relevance of these platforms and their integration into individuals' daily routines.

This behavior may be influenced by various factors, such as easy access to mobile devices, the need to stay informed in real time, and social interaction in digital environments. Additionally, excessive social media use could also be associated with phenomena such as procrastination, information overload, or even digital fatigue—aspects that could be explored in complementary studies.

Analysis of the Main Reason for Social Media Use

1)   Figure 3 shows that the main reasons respondents use social media are entertainment (39%) and socializing (34%), suggesting that most users perceive these platforms as spaces for leisure and interpersonal communication.

**Figure 3. Reason For Using Social Networks**

Source: Authors (2023)

At a second level of importance, professional use (17%) reflects that a significant group of users also engage with social media for work or networking purposes. However, academic use is the least frequent (7%), indicating that, although social media can serve as an educational tool, it is not the primary function for most respondents. The low percentage in the 'Other' category suggests that most users clearly identify with the established categories, indicating that social media plays well-defined roles in people's lives.

Finally, while social media remains primarily a space for leisure and socialization, its potential in academic and professional fields still has room for growth with the right strategies.

Analysis of Information Use and Cyber Risks

Figure 4 presents respondents' perceptions regarding the appropriate use of information, its reliability, and awareness of cyber risks. It shows that 60% of respondents consider they use information appropriately, suggesting a generally responsible approach. However, the remaining 40% are either unsure or do not follow proper information practices.

Figure 4. Use and Security of Social Networks
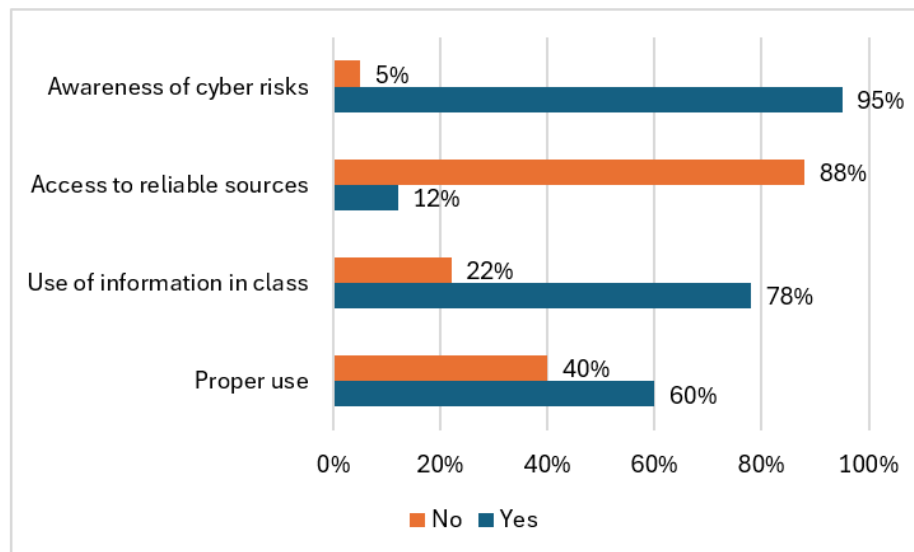
Source: Authors (2023)

Although the ease of access to information on the internet is recognized, it is crucial to foster the ability to evaluate sources and distinguish reliable information. Additionally, more than 70% of respondents believe that information obtained online facilitates classroom learning, indicating that digital tools are perceived as a valuable resource in education.

Regarding cybersecurity, while most people are aware of cyber risks, it would be beneficial to complement this knowledge with practical strategies to prevent fraud, phishing attacks, and data theft. In conclusion, the results reflect a positive perception of online information access but also highlight challenges related to reliability and critical usage.

Discussion

The analysis of the obtained results allowed for the identification of key trends in social media usage within the sample from Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca.

Firstly, it was evident that Facebook is the most widely used social network, which aligns with Banguero Mina (2020), who states that this platform has 2.449 billion users worldwide. This correlation suggests that Facebook continues to play a central role in Colombians' digital interactions, remaining one of the main platforms for communication and entertainment.

Regarding time spent on social media, the findings of this study show that a significant portion of respondents spends more than 10 hours per week on these platforms. This result is comparable to the data from Martín Critikián & Medina Núñez (2021), who indicate that, on average, users spend 1 hour and 19 minutes per day on social media, which amounts to over 8 hours per week.

The results support the hypothesis of intensive social media use, which could lead to long-term psychological, academic, and social implications. Various studies have indicated that excessive social media consumption may be associated with decreased productivity, negative effects on mental health, and changes in social interaction patterns. Technology facilitates communication and interaction while also influencing behaviors and attitudes. However, it can have a negative impact when it interferes with daily activities and affects mental, physical, and social well-being (González-Santos et al., 2021).

These findings highlight the need to promote a balanced use of social media, especially in educational settings, where its impact can affect both academic performance and students' well-being. Future studies could focus on analyzing strategies for regulating social media usage time and its effects on productivity and educational improvement among students.

Conclusions

The findings of this research suggest that social media plays a fundamental role in shaping perceptions and study habits among university students. With well-designed strategies implemented by educators, the time students spend on social media can be leveraged for educational purposes. However, despite being aware of the significant amount of time they dedicate to these platforms and recognizing that much of the available information lacks reliability, students continue to increase their social media consumption.

The use and consumption of social media in the academic and social environment of Business Administration students at Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca highlight its fundamental role in communication, learning, and relationship-building. Social media facilitates access to relevant information, interaction between students and teachers, and the integration of digital tools into the educational process. However, it also presents challenges such as distraction and digital fatigue, emphasizing the need to promote a balanced and mindful use of these platforms.

The use and consumption of social media in the academic and social environment of Business Administration students at Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca reflect its growing integration into learning and communication processes. While most students are aware of cybersecurity risks and use social media as an information source, challenges remain in identifying reliable sources and effectively utilizing these resources in academic settings. Therefore, there is a clear need to strengthen digital literacy and critical thinking strategies to maximize the benefits of social media while minimizing risks, promoting responsible and efficient use within the university environment.

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