The role of social networks for future journalists. Management, use and behavior of students and university professors of Ecuador

El rol de las redes sociales para futuros periodistas. Manejo, uso y comportamiento de estudiantes y profesores universitarios de Ecuador

O papel das redes sociais para futuros jornalistas. Manejo, uso e comportamento de estudantes e professores universitários de Equador

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ABSTRACT | Social networks has led to a change in the media production, dissemination, and consumption routines. Future journalists and their professors face the challenge of their professional and personal use. This research investigates the uses, consumption preferences, and capacity of control of these two groups regarding social networks in different universities in Ecuador. The methodological triangulation (survey, focus group and panel of experts) allows to observe the relationship that communication students and professors have with social networks and the effect on their teaching work. The results reveal that young university students have an active profile on social networks where, mainly through the smartphone, they view, share, and create content to be entertained and informed, expressing interest in being part of a community of users. Likewise, they consider social networks as a professional showcase and feel the need to take care of their digital spaces. Professors see social media as a place to stay updated, following trusted professionals or media. Their presence in social networks is limited, characterized by observation, and they do not feel sufficiently trained in technologies for their teaching practice, nor they have the time to do it.

KEYWORDS: social networks; communication; higher education; journalism; media convergence; smartphone.

RESUMEN| *Las redes sociales cambian las rutinas productivas, de difusión y de consumo de los medios de comunicación. Los futuros periodistas y sus docentes se enfrentan al desafío de su uso profesional y personal. Esta investigación indaga en los usos, preferencias de consumo y dominio de las redes sociales de estos dos colectivos en varias universidades ecuatorianas. La triangulación metodológica (encuesta, focus group y panel de expertos) aborda la relación que establecen con las redes sociales, el efecto en su día a día y en el quehacer docente. Los resultados revelan que los estudiantes tienen un perfil activo en redes sociales. Usan principalmente el smartphone para visualizar, compartir y crear contenido para entretenerse e informarse y manifiestan interés por formar parte de una comunidad de usuarios. También consideran a las redes sociales como un escaparate profesional y sienten necesidad de cuidar sus espacios digitales. Los docentes ven en las redes sociales un lugar para actualizarse y siguen a profesionales o medios de comunicación de confianza. Su presencia en las redes es limitada, caracterizada por la observación, y no se sienten lo suficientemente formados en tecnologías para su práctica docente, ni que disponen de tiempo para ello.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *redes sociales; comunicación; educación superior; periodismo; convergencia mediática; smartphone.*

RESUMO| As redes sociais mudam as rotinas produtivas, de difusão e de consumo da mídia. Os futuros jornalistas e seus docentes enfrentam o desafio de seu uso profissional e pessoal. Essa pesquisa indaga nos usos, as preferências de consumo e domínio das redes sociais destes dois grupos em várias universidades equatorianas. A triangulação metodológica (questionário, focus group e painel de especialistas) aborda a relação estabelecida com as redes sociais, o efeito no seu dia a dia e no trabalho docente. Os resultados mostram que os estudantes têm um perfil ativo nas redes sociais. Eles usam principalmente o smartphone para visualizar, compartilhar e criar conteúdo para se divertirem e informarem, e expressam interesse em fazer parte de uma comunidade de usuários. Eles também consideram as redes sociais como uma vitrine profissional e sentem a necessidade de cuidar de seus espaços digitais. Os professores veem nas redes sociais um lugar para se atualizarem e seguirem a profissionais ou mídia de confiança. Sua presença nas redes é limitada, caracterizada pela observação, e eles não sentem que estão suficientemente treinados em tecnologias para sua prática de ensino, nem que têm tempo para fazê-lo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: redes sociais; comunicação; educação superior; jornalismo; convergência de mídia; smartphone.

INTRODUCTION

Ecuador is one of the Latin American countries with the highest Internet penetration rate (We are social & Hootsuite, 2018; Internet World Stats, 2019), especially among young people, reaching 97% according to the *World Internet Project Ecuador* (Arribas-Urrutia, Islas-Carmona, & Gutiérrez, 2019). The rapid expansion of social networks is helping to normalize their use in fields as disparate as education (García-Ruiz, Gozálvez, & Aguaded, 2014; Martínez-Sanz, Islas Carmona, Campos Domínguez, & Redondo García, 2016), governance (Caridad & Martínez, 2016; Negrete-Huelga & Rivera-Magos, 2018), or the business sector (Durántez-Stolle, 2017), strongly conditioned by the digital ecosystem.

This irruption has transformed the way of understanding, teaching, and practicing journalism (García Orosa & López García, 2016), giving rise to a media convergence that reinforces the audiences' possibilities of action and participation (Jenkins, 2008). This paradigm brings with it a narrative, organizational, and business model change in which social networks play a pollinating and value-added role, subject to the ability to manage and create community (CamposFreire, Rúas-Araújo, López-García, & Martínez-Fernández, 2016).

On the other hand, teaching activity has also been affected, both from the point of view of the teaching and learning process (Barrios & Fajardo, 2017) and by the incorporation of subjects in the curricula related to multimedia journalism, immersive journalism, and data journalism (López-García, Rodríguez-Vázquez, & Pereira-Fariña, 2017; Chaparro Domínguez, 2014). Tejedor and Cervi (2017) stress that, to continue providing relevance to the profession, it is necessary to update the curricular programs according to the competencies and profiles demanded by the labor market (Lopezosa, Codina, Díaz-Noci, & Ontalba, 2020), and to deliver technological training to the teaching staff.

The overabundance of information, sometimes biased, the interest in influencing the audience, or the collection of data derived from our virtual actions are just some of the dangers associated with consulting the Internet (Caro Samada, 2015), and which future journalists and their teachers face daily. This work, in addition to inquiring into the habits of information consumption, has as a secondary objective: to know the perception and interaction routines in social networks of these two groups called to understand each other, which represents the main challenge of this research. The use of social networks is part of the evolution of the journalistic profession that will be exercised by those who are now being trained, and research in this area can contribute to support future changes in the approach to the studies of this profession, as well as in the methodologies of its teaching.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Internet in the profession and teaching of journalism

The future of the journalistic profession and its teaching is going through a crucial moment with the Internet and, above all, with social networks. In just two decades, digital media have multiplied, and journalistic routines have changed radically (Mayoral Sánchez, 2016; Navarro Zamora, 2012). The multiplicity of platforms has caused profound changes in the media map, affecting conventional media without exception. Likewise, the roles linked to the production and consumption of information are atomized thanks to the mobility and personalization of the content provided by the media, and the inclusion of social networks within their dissemination structure and relationship with audiences. Therefore, the analysis of Web 2.0 is of crucial importance to understand the functioning and structure of institutions and the relationship they maintain with journalism and with the different forms of communication (Sampedro, 2015), since it is individuals who make up these social networks and who, ultimately, achieve social changes and transformations.

However, for Ramón Salaverría (2010), the definitive take off of these digital media has not yet occurred mainly for two reasons: the absence of a real business model, despite the huge Internet audiences, and the lack of innovation in terms of its structure and content logic that replicate what is present in the traditional media. The public chooses to be informed through digital platforms, while large media groups are punished by the low advertising investment that has migrated to these spaces (Martínez-Costa, Serrano-Puche, Portilla, & Sánchez-Blanco, 2019). The advice that Salaverría proposed at the time to face this uncertain panorama is still valid (Túñez-López, Fieiras Ceide, & Vaz-Álvarez, 2021), and is directed towards the commitment to Internet reporting, innovation in genres and formats, the development of cybermedia guidelines, and the renewal of the training curriculum of journalism studies at the university, among others.

Regarding the updating of curricular contents, there is a need for coherence with the most demanded job profiles linked to the digital transformation. Thus, curricula must be revisited to train journalism professionals towards a digital media ecosystem that is gradually becoming a fact in Latin American universities (Cuesta & Lugo-Ortiz, 2017; Mellado, 2011). However, beyond incorporating subjects related to the Internet "we must teach how to practice it with, in and on, and through the Internet [...] only journalists who thoroughly master the fundamentals of digital communication will be in a position to build the foundations of a renewed journalistic profession on the network" (Salaverría, 2010, p. 248).

In this same way, we can point out that the curricular change should be directed towards a cyberjournalism that integrates both traditional and emerging practices,

without necessarily training a technologically prepared professional, but rather one who conceives technologies as a tool that facilitates his or her objective as a journalist, which is to seek to democratize information (Nieto Borda, 2021).

Teacher training in technological competencies is a widely researched topic (Sandí Delgado & Sanz, 2018; Martínez-Sanz et al., 2016). However, it should be emphasized that the digital aspect is part of the professional competence of teachers at any level of education; therefore, it is not only a matter of providing them with technological equipment for teaching, but of constant and updated training in two senses: the handling of digital devices and the appropriate pedagogy for a productive teaching-learning process (Durán Cuartero, Gutiérrez Porlán, & Prendes Espinosa, 2016). Celia Castaño (2016) argues that teachers should know how to use technology from different perspectives: technical, applied, social, and ethical. Similarly, Shapiro and Hudhese (1996, in Bawden, 2002) describe up to seven dimensions around this teacher-oriented digital literacy that contemplates aspects such as:

- The acquisition of skills in the use of tools related to information technology.

- The mastery of the forms and methods of access to web resources.

- The understanding of the social context and the information production.

- The ability to apply technological tools to research and academic work.

- The ability to disseminate information.

- The vision and overall understanding of technological innovations that will allow him/her to make the best decisions regarding them.

- The ability to critically evaluate the benefits and costs of technologies, which implies incorporating an ethical aspect to this literacy.

Journalism teachers and their students face the use of the Internet and social networks as information dissemination tools. However, for the media, providing information is no longer enough; they have to offer spaces for communication and socialization with their audiences. As Lara (2008) states, it is not enough to produce and offer news: now the media must provide service and be useful to their audiences by encouraging open and quality participation.

> […] is a way of reconnecting with society and overcoming the authority, mediation, and credibility crisis in which the press is currently immersed. Faced with this scenario, the media need to create contexts where their audiences can interact with the medium and with other users, where people feel the space as their own, as a place of belonging and of personal and community reference (Lara, 2008, p. 129).

For Noguera (2010), the greatest potential of social networks lies in the conversion of journalism towards a more social and transparent model, with an architecture for the management of the latest news, the search for new sources, and the constant contextualization of content in more social and dynamic spaces than those offered by the cybermedia. In this regard, the author points out that "the networks, with their behavior and their audiences, have convinced the media that they cannot reach new audiences if they do not give up the mistaken premise of keeping the reader, literally, under their domains on the Web" (p. 181).

The use of social networks by journalists is a key factor for the distribution and consumption of news. These digital spaces contribute to the revaluation of their authors, provided there is a planned management and an adaptation of the contents to the idiosyncrasy of the platform and the demands of its audiences (Picard, 2014). The *Washington Post* already warned in its user manual that journalists should not forget their status as representatives of the media during their appearances on social networks, and that accuracy, along with transparency, were requirements in their interventions. Tascón retrieves the guidelines that *The Washington Post* gave to its journalists for the use of social networks: "We must remember that *Washington Post* journalists are always *Washington Post* journalists" (2012, p. 86). From this statement of intent, it is clear that for the U.S. medium even personal profiles must abide by the company's rules, limiting any private use of this space.

With social networks, journalists have seen the visibility of their work enhanced. If the professional has the competence and ability to manage his or her personal brand, he or she will be able to create added value to his or her credibility as a source of information. Also, the digital environment presents a great opportunity to undertake innovative journalistic projects, providing autonomy to journalists. Noguera points out that

> Digital identity management should be at the top of the priorities list. Without a correct analysis of who we are for those to whom we are a stranger, i.e., of the profile we offer on the web about our identity, it is difficult to successfully undertake any kind of personal digital project (2012, p. 15).

In the case of Ecuador, there is still a long way to go in terms of creating a digital personal brand for Ecuadorian journalists, although there is a continuous growth in credibility in cybermedia (Odriozola Chéné & Rodrigo-Mendizábal, 2017). Researchers Yáñez, Martínez, and Barrios (2018) point out that Ecuadorian journalists have achieved their prestige in traditional media without resorting to social networks to strengthen their identity. They add that Ecuadorian journalists have not shown much interest in building a digital personal brand, and that their recognition is given by the program they host or by the media outlet they work for.

According to the authors, there are still very few professionals committed to managing their identity in cyberspace by relying on social networks.

METHODOLOGY

This work is descriptive and focuses on analyzing how future journalists and their professors participate in social networks in several universities in Ecuador, to identify how they interact with the information content available on the network, delving into the digital skills they have, the technological equipment used, and the predisposition to generate content. A hypothesis is formulated in relation to each of the groups studied:

> *H1.* Students participate in social networks in an impulsive, proactive, and multiscreen manner, largely conditioned by their predisposition towards experimentation in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), which they apply to both their personal and pre-professional aspects. Previous studies such as that of Herrero-Diz, Tapia-Frade, and Varona-Aramburu (2020) show the consolidation of mobile devices for information consumption.

> *H2.* The digital incursion of teachers in social networks is governed by caution, observation, and systematization of actions. Different international organizations stress the importance of teacher training in ICTs as a key factor for educational innovation and improvement; however, works such as those of García-Pérez, Rebollo-Catalán, and GarcíaPérez (2016) demonstrate a residual use of social networks by teachers as a training tool.

To ensure the reliability of the data, this research resorted to methodological triangulation, which allows the approach, from different methods and techniques, of the same object of study. According to Morse (1991), methodological triangulation involves the use of at least two methods, usually one quantitative and one qualitative, to study the same research problem. Methodological triangulation was conducted within method and across method (Arias, 2000). The first consisted of collecting data from different subjects (experts and respondents) to measure the same variables. The second relied on the combination of different techniques (focus groups, in-depth interviews, and surveys) to ensure an approach to the phenomenon under study.

More specifically, the approach to the group of young university students was done through an online survey on and three discussion groups with undergraduate and master's degree Communication students from the Universidad de Los Hemisferios (UHemisferios) in Quito, Ecuador. The aim was to learn, through direct testimony, about aspects such as the profile that future journalists adopt in social networks and the informative use they make of them, how and under what circumstances they disseminate content, or the role played by mobile media in these processes.
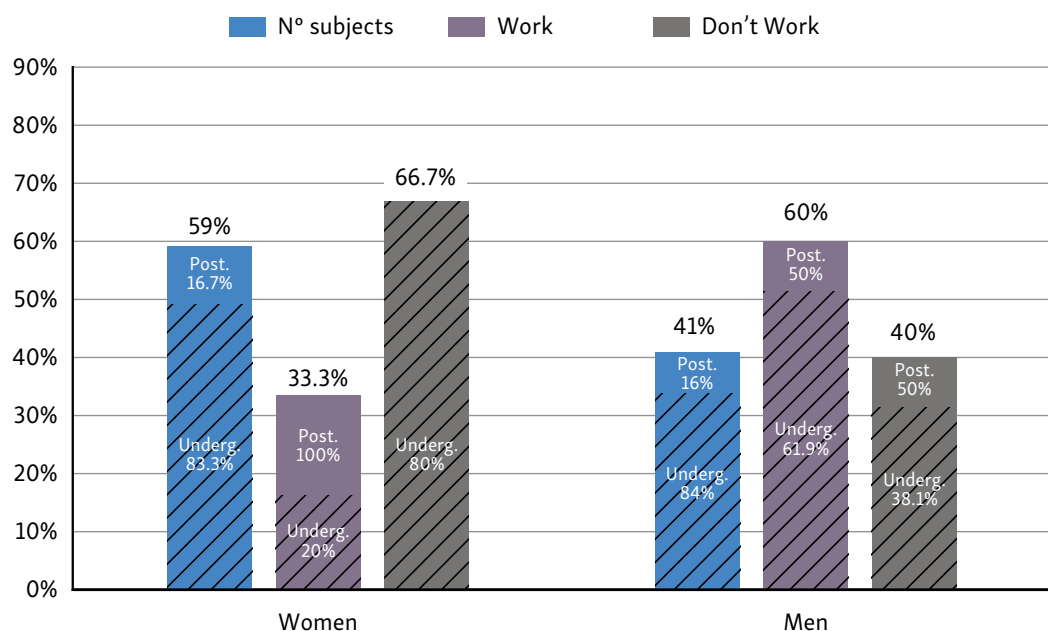
Post. = Postgraduate; Underg.= Undergraduate

Figure 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample of students surveyed

Source: Own elaboration.

The total population of undergraduate and postgraduate students in Communication is 150 students (N=150). The survey was answered by 51 undergraduate and 10 postgraduate students (n=61), which implies a margin of error of 5.8 and a confidence level of 95%, considering also that there is no maximum indeterminacy since the undergraduate profile p(90) is more represented in the sample than the postgraduate profile q(10). The questionnaire, applied to an accessible non-probabilistic sample, had seven specific questions dedicated to the topic addressed by this study, and was distributed online among the students of the four courses that make up the undergraduate and master's degree in Communication at UHemisferios (figure 1). The discussion groups, on the other hand, were conducted in person in three groups of eight members and lasted, on average, 40 minutes, at the university facilities.

To obtain the vision of the other group involved, that of teachers, we used the Delphi method: a panel of 18 experts –9 men and 9 women– was formed, all of them reputed professors of Communication at four Ecuadorian universities: Universidad de Los Hemisferios, Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, Universidad de las Américas, and Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, who were sent a questionnaire of 22 questions arranged by thematic blocks: 1. Technological equipment and willingness to continue to train themselves in its use; 2. Digital platforms as a vehicle for information; 3. Reliability and spectacularization of content on the Web, and 4. Types of participation through social networks.

The data obtained from the surveys were coded using SPSS statistical software, while the focus groups and in-depth interviews were recorded and transcribed.

RESULTS
Students rely on volatility and enjoy observation

The university students surveyed (n=61) have an active profile on an average of 3.65 social networks. As shown by figure 2, almost the totality of the sample is present on Facebook, although when it comes to indicating which of all is their favorite, a third opt for it (37.7%), another third for Instagram (36.1%), and the remainder fragments into the rest of the options.

However, if we look at the gender of the respondents –41% are men and 59%, women– we observe that the latter's preference for Instagram (41.7%) and Facebook (38.9%) is above average, while the number of profiles open and in use matches that of men (3.6).

The focus groups showed that Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook were the most frequently mentioned apps among participants between the ages of 20 and 25, while those in the older age range –mostly postgraduate students– post their comments on preferences and habits in Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

More than half of the students state that they use their favorite social network primarily for entertainment (67.2%), information (62.3%), and socializing (55.7%). "As a Communication student, I am interested in information and I am regularly checking the news" (male, 21 years old). Other uses referred to are as a channel for professional promotion (24.6%) or social activism (21.3%).

Curiously, the desire to denounce, to speak out when they feel an injustice has occurred, is a recurring motivation among young people to publish their own posts on their virtual spaces: animal abuse, incivility, political corruption, and natural disasters were the most frequently mentioned issues during the discussion groups. These meetings served to confirm that the main purpose of accessing social networks is entertainment: to see what others are doing and to keep abreast of the latest trends.

Regardless of the intentionality pursued, the smartphone is the support par excellence for viewing and creating content. The tablet and the computer are discarded as an access tool –never used– by 59% and 8.2%, respectively. The assessments collected during the focus groups are along these lines: "The smartphone has become an essential element in our lives, even certain school tasks are solved with it" (woman, 20 years old). Likewise, they feel that they cannot leave their phone away: "When I don't look at it for a long time, when I look back at it, it's ready to explode" (woman, 20 years old). Some feel that this need has been imposed by an increasingly demanding labor market regarding connectivity:
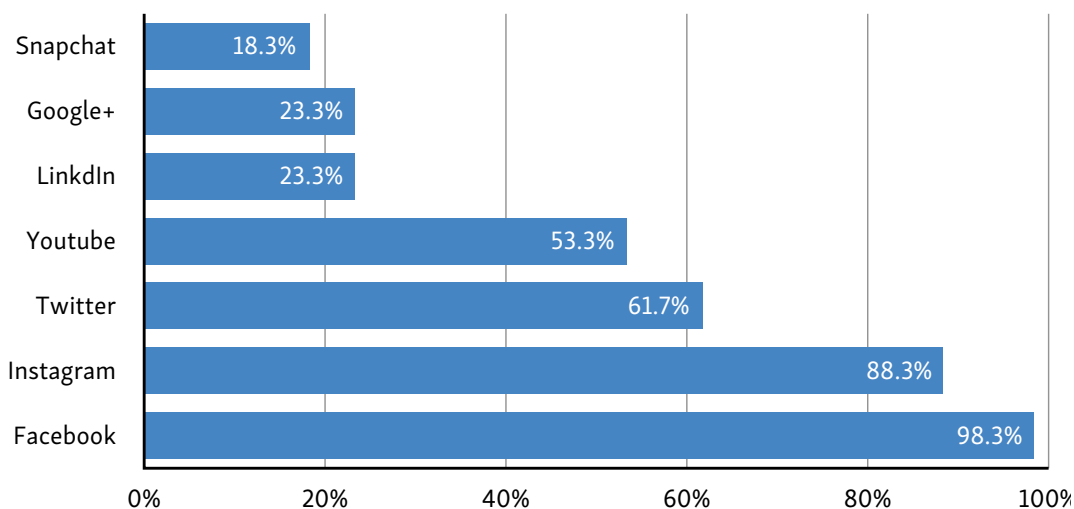
Figure 2. Percentage of university students with updated accounts

Source: Own elaboration.

"I have to be glued to the phone, my job, which is linked to communication, demands it. I know of people who have even signed it in their contract" (woman, 26 years old).

There is also coincidence when it comes to the ability to efficiently multitask, being the smartphone consultation the one that is always combined with the rest: listening to the teacher, following the thread of a conversation, or watching a movie.

Some students understand social networks as a showcase to project themselves professionally and feel the obligation to take care of their digital spaces: "You don't know who might see you or what job opportunity might present itself" (male, 37 years old). "Instagram makes it possible for me to capture my personality as it is, and little by little create a visual image of myself" (female, 22 years old). This awareness of the transcendence of their actions largely justifies the use of applications whose distinctive feature is the volatility of the content posted. "With Snapchat, content disappears after 24 hours. Gone is the risk that someone 5, 10, or 20 years from now will take a photo that will ruin your reputation" (male, 21 years old). They want to protect their privacy. However, even those who define themselves as passive users admit to sporadically posting aspects of their private lives. "The last time I posted something related to my personal life? ... Quite a while ago, at least 6-7 months ago, because of my dad's death" (male, 38 years old).

The longitudinal study by Arribas-Urrutia, Islas-Carmona, and Gutiérrez (2019) conducted through the World Internet Project (WIP) recognized the growing tendency of young Ecuadorians to share and viralize the content of others. Our survey, distributed specifically among university students, reaffirms this, as 83.6% connect to their social network profiles daily to read/view the content of others, and 57.4% do it daily or several times a week to create their own posts (figure 3).
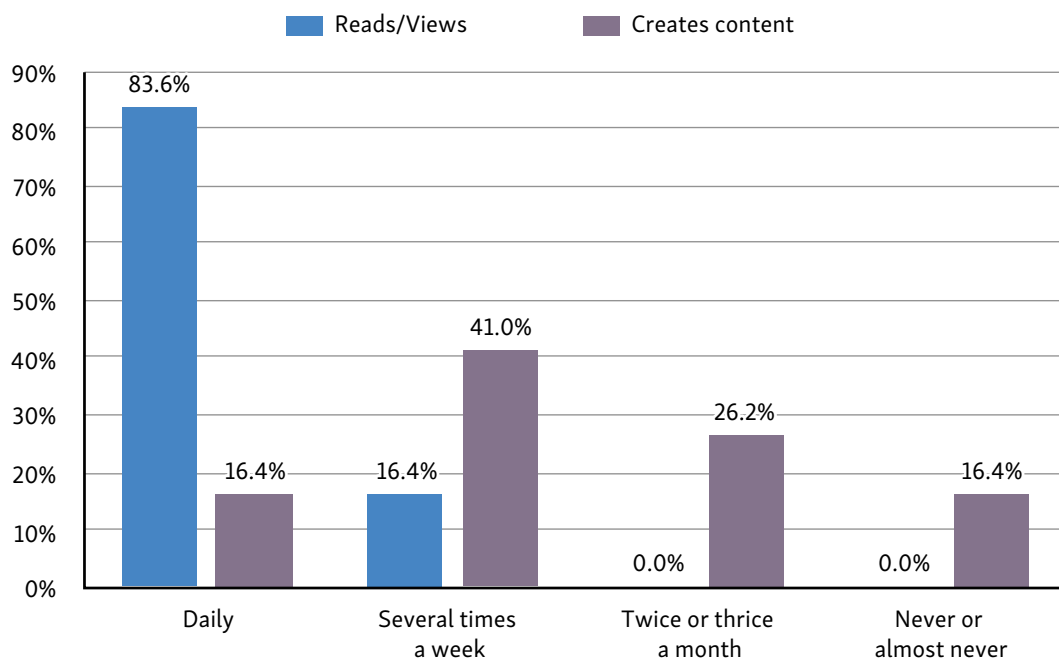
Figure 3. Frequency and intentionality of access to social networks

Source: Own elaboration.

When asked about the forms of interaction implemented in the last six months with an organization or brand, 38.5% of respondents reported retweeting or liking/disliking content. "I can easily spend 10 hours a day on social media. Sharing and seeing what others upload takes up most of my time" (female, 22 years old).

In terms of using social networks to stay informed, only 21.8% stated that they follow a media outlet or prominent journalist. "I find out about certain news not because I look for them, but because they jump out at me" (female, 20 years old), while others point out that, as future communicologists, they feel the need to share and pass on to their closest circles the most important information. It is noteworthy that during the discussion groups, young people between 20 and 25 years expressed great interest in being part of the community of users of certain influencers –Instagramers or YouTubers–, leaders in the sector for which they are truly passionate: sports, fashion, and entertainment, mainly. In fact, 63.9% recognized in the survey that within their circle of friends (following) there are commercial brands, companies, or organizations (figure 4).

For young people, the network is synonymous with topicality and instantaneousness: "If a topic is trending, interest in participating in the debate and contributing increases compared to other issues" (female, 22 years old). However, if there is one motivation especially mentioned for initiating or supporting a debate, it is to raise one's voice against abuses or injustices, mainly of a local scope.
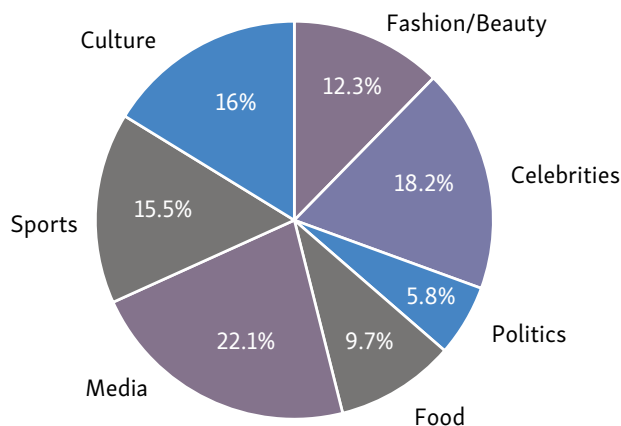
Figure 4. Sector to which the organizations followed by university students through social networks belong

Source: Own elaboration.

An expectant and cautious teaching staff in the face of change

The results of a survey applied on 18 university professors, from four different centers located in Ecuador, specializing in communication, show that they primarily have a desktop computer and a smartphone, with the consequent personal financial outlay that this entails. On the other hand, those who buy a tablet or a phablet[1] are residual, and those who do and move away from the usual material –computer or smartphone– recognize that they are not taking advantage of their full potential, due to lack of skills.

This situation reinforces the predisposition of teachers to improve their technological skills, demanding from their workplaces a greater investment in teacher training applied to new technologies. However, lack of time or the high prices of the courses that interest them are the most frequently mentioned limitations.

The teacher, as a professional in the educational field, feels the need and the obligation to remain informed not only of the closest and local reality, but also of national and international current affairs. Mainly through the traditional media, which he or she consults almost daily, the teacher forges his or her conception of what is happening. However, not all media are given the same consideration and are not consulted in the same way. The digital press, due to its ease of access and consultation, is the most demanded, as well as social networks, since they recognize their role in the dissemination of breaking news; nevertheless, they must come from journalists or established media who, in addition, are given the

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1. Smartphone of more than 5.5 inches.

same level of credibility as the written or digital press. The same is not true of television, which is the most reviled medium.

Despite trusting the digital media, Ecuadorian teachers recognize that, on many occasions, web portals succumb to the clickbait phenomenon, in which a very striking headline is offered that does not meet the expectations, disappointing the reader, and whose only purpose is to increase the number of accesses to information. In Ecuador, this way of proceeding is associated with contents linked to the tabloids and events and, to a lesser extent, with the more traditional sections, such as politics.

University professors are interested in social networks and believe it is convenient to be on them, although they recognize that their presence is, in most cases, limited, as they publish little original content. The fear of exposure, the possible consequences and, above all, the high time demanded by this activity, emerge as the main limitations to the attempt to generate their own content. In view of the above, it can be said that the priority use that this group applies to social networks is unanimous: to be informed. Consequently, it is more a matter of consuming, and not so much of producing if it is not to socialize, i.e., to maintain ties of friendship with other people.

Teachers are aware of their interest in making the most of the informative function of social networks, adding to their circle of friends or to the list of those they follow profiles of journalists or media they trust. They also admit that they are regular viralizers of the contents signed by said media. The most important criterion for taking sides and interacting in some way is that the content addresses issues close to the teacher's interests or has a social denouncing element, thus making visible what they understand as injustices. Although it is true that there is a fear of overexposure on social networks, teachers recognize that political, cultural, and sports-related content is the most frequent source of their own comments on social networks.

CONCLUSIONS

The emergence of social networks has entailed a change in the media's production, dissemination, and consumption routines, disrupting the way of doing things and, consequently, the training of future journalists. The capacity of social networks to transmit information, provide visibility to journalistic work, interact, and be a space for corporate projection and personal branding are sufficient reasons to investigate how this tool and its supports are used by the main groups involved in the training process: Communication students and their teachers.

By combining several techniques –both quantitative and qualitative– we explored the routines, preferences, and willingness to participate in the web platforms of these groups. The results show that university students in Communication assign different values and functionalities to each social network, to some extent conditioned by their age and gender, which would explain the generalized tendency to have an active profile on more than three platforms. Information and, above all, entertainment, would monopolize most of the time, with social networks being a source of resources to cover emotional, social, and relational needs (Del Prete & Redon, 2020). The results obtained here indicate that young people make extensive use of technologies, mainly to interact with their peers. We can also say that social networks have an educational value, since they form personal and social values, as pointed out by De Haro (2010). Our research detects the concern of Ecuadorian university students for social issues, which is manifested in the use of social networks as spaces for denunciation.

The fear of future journalists of seeing their image damaged by a comment or image of the past worries them, and this leads them to rely on ephemeral spaces whose hallmark is the disappearance of the published content after 24 hours. Despite this, they shamelessly expose aspects of their private life, which confirms H1 from which we started: predisposition to experiment, interest in technology, and thoughtlessness character, as also supported by the works of Caro Samada (2015) or Macedo, Salmeron, Ros, Perez, Stadtler, and Rouet (2020), who point out the inability of the youngest to prioritize reliable sources. Likewise, it is verified that the smartphone, far from being used as a facilitating tool, has become a burden, with constant reaffirmations of dependence and demand for use (Riehm et al., 2019).

Few are the journalism referents, active in cyberspace, mentioned by the students, which reinforces the media's loss of leadership (Villafañe, Ortiz, & Martín, 2020). In contrast, the young people interviewed find greater interest in the contents elaborated by Instagramers or YouTubers linked to the topics that interest them, such as fashion, sports, or leisure.

In the case of teachers, there is a general feeling that the Internet and social networks are the present and the future and that they must be on them. The effort not to be left behind is evident: acquisition of technological supports, demand for training, self-learning, etc. However, caution and, above all, the need to invest a lot of time –which they do not have– slow down the creation of their own content on social networks. The majority tendency is to zealously control who is part of their virtual circle of friends and to give credibility only to information from recognized sources or media, sharing it frequently, aspects that would support the initial H2. As was the case with students, the social purpose or denunciation is presented as the main motivation for publishing their own content.

The profiles analyzed show a very different perception and use of social networks based on age. Thus, younger university students appropriate them to follow their role models, represented by influencers; postgraduate students associate them with their professional work, with a high concern for the digital footprint, and professors care about their informative role. In all cases, observation and viralization of others' content predominates, as concluded by Arribas-Urrutia, Islas-Carmona, and Gutiérrez (2019).

The characteristics of media consumption have changed significantly with the arrival of social networks, both in future journalists and in their teachers' habits and skills. The work of Herrero-Diz, Tapia-Frade, and Varona-Aramburu (2020) confirms that, in Spain, the tendency to consume news through the smartphone is consolidated, forcing cybermedia to offer attractive mobile proposals, especially in video format. This makes us think of an open debate about, on the one hand, the changes required by the media to regain lost leadership and, on the other, the digital skills required from journalism teachers to face an era of convergence.

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