

Editorial



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Emerging technology, especially technological developments resulting from the expansion of the Internet, is part of the advances of the twenty-first century. The use of technology and social networks has benefits that consolidate them as essential tool for the youth. Hence, today, Internet has become the flagship tool for communication, information seeking and leisure among young people and adolescents around the world.

However, there are also problems resulting from it. The Internet, and more specifically social networks, also present important risks that cause serious problems, such as abuse or uncontrolled use that leads to addiction, classified as a serious health problem among the younger population by international organizations.

Addiction is also composed by other negative consequences that affect mental and even physical health. Social networks are characterized by the absence of the need for physical contact for communication and socialization and the possibility of simultaneously communicating and sharing leisure activities with a large volume of people, in addition to the technical ease of breaking up or suspending relationships and contacts. Disinhibition comes from anonymity coupled with ease of use and quick access, turning social networks into a tool and digital space where abuse, disrespect or cyberbullying are more frequent every day.

Hence, it is essential to reflect on the use and abuse made by children, adolescents and young people both of social networks and technological devices with a double objective: to know when they begin to use these tools and understand why, where and how they use them; to design educational strategies that empower young people in a sustainable, responsible and healthy use of technology.

Conducting these two objectives will turn us into a society that promotes healthy use of technology and social networks. Educational institutions are important in this search for answers. These include elementary, secondary and university education centers, which are responsible for developing sustainable digital literacy among students, having an impact on their families, environment, context and society. It is important that educational institutions and schools address the social problem arising from addictions to technology and unsuitable or dangerous uses of it, both for prevention and for early detection and development of the immediate solution or response.

Therefore, both the educational and scientific communities, and the editors of this monograph talk about the need to reflect on the responses that educational institutions and their members, from families to teachers, should give to the addiction to technology and social networks presented by youth. Thus, it is essential to answer questions regarding technological addictions, such as the ways to prevent them in this social group, what are the answers that educational institutions can offer, what good practices exist in the different educational levels to promote the prevention or

detection of addictions, or if a well-structured educational system can face the challenge of reducing addiction to technology and promote a responsible use of it.

The aim of this monograph titled “Responses of educational institutions to addiction to technology” is to look for answers by presenting research and analysis of current situations and experiences that deepen and reflect on the use, abuse and addiction to technology. In addition, the reader can see a complete picture, through the in-depth reading of research and studies that begin analyzing the topic of addition to technology in the early ages, until reaching young university students in an international scope.

In this sense, the monographic begins with the work entitled “Internet, Smartphone and Social Networks: Between use and abuse, before addiction”. The main objective of this study is to determine how sixth grade students use their smartphone, Internet and social networks and to assess to which extent they are abusing them. To do this, three questions are answered, which were the main objective of the research: 1. What does the students use the Internet for? 2. At what age did the students have a smartphone? and 3. Do they use social networks safely? The study, despite noting that most children between 11 and 12 years old use technology reasonably, it warns that there is a group of students who make an abusive and excessive use of digital technology, both because of the type of publications they make and their frequency. Hence, the alert to pay attention to the habits of using technology among youth to prevent addictions since they are very young. It prompts us to reflect on the way in which we should be literate in the responsible use of technology at an early age.

Then, there is an analysis on adolescents in Mexico titled “Problematic use of online social networks: the case of mexican students”. After analyzing a sample of 17,600 students from the Public Educational System of Mexico, the authors highlight that young people spend excessive time on social networks, having a negative impact on their academic performance, family and social life. The results of this study therefore corroborate what has been presented in other studies at the international level in relation to the generations characterized by the obsessive need to be informed and connected.

The third article of the monograph, “Dependence and addiction to smartphones among university students: Myth or reality?” reflects and analyzes the addiction to smartphones by university students.

The technology that has disrupted our lives, and those of our young university students, is definitely the smartphone. Nowadays, no one doubts that there are more mobile phones than people in the world, so it is almost impossible to see a person who is not carrying a smartphone when walking, doing physical activity, going shopping or doing any errand. We could say that watching the mobile can be considered the first action many people do in the morning day and also in bedtime.

However, the unbalanced and disproportionate use of this type of mobile devices can generate serious consequences on the physical and mental well-being of their users. However, according to Roig-Vila, López-Padrón and Urrea-Solano, mobile phone addiction is still a topic of debate among the scientific community. For this reason, they presented a study that delves into the type of use of mobile by university students and whether this use can be described as problematic.

The conclusions are really encouraging, since according to the results obtained it is noted that university students see themselves as habitual users, but do not present addictive or nomophobia traits. Therefore, their behavior may not be labeled as dependent or addictive. This aspect, according to the authors of the research, along with the potentialities presented by smartphones for learning makes relevant the need to deepen the idea of integrating them to enhance teaching-learning processes in university classrooms, of course, considering the risks that overuse can cause and focusing not only on students but also on university professors. More specifically the digital competences and



digital teaching competences they present, and their perception and perspective in relation to addictions. Even analyzing their own habits of using technology.

In this regard, the fourth article of the monographic titled "Addiction to ICT. Teaching perspective from three university centers", carries out research with university professors from three university centers of the University of Guadalajara, who offer their perception on Internet use from the Internet Use Test developed by Kimberly Young.

As it happened with students at university levels, this paper also confirms that professors consider that making a rational use of technology is beneficial. In spite of this, the researchers highlight that the sample analyzed presents some indications that warn about excessive uses that can lead to addiction. Among these inappropriate uses, they describe loss of awareness of internet usage time, feeling a certain degree of anxiety at times when they cannot connect, or consulting social networks or email, delaying their priority activities.

Despite pointing out these results and indications that are very interesting for the scientific community, according to Prieto-Quezada, Romero-Sánchez and Oliva, what truly reaffirms this work is the need to deepen studies on professors, both from the point of view of their personal and professional use of technology.

In this line and in order to complete research and educational reality in relation to the topic of addiction to technology from an educational perspective, the monographic ends with the presentation of a phenomenon directly related with the incorrect use of mobile device in classrooms, which is known as phubbing.

The authors Medina-Morales and Villalón-Hernández define phubbing as the act of belittling or ignoring a person physically for paying more attention to a mobile device. This is a phenomenon that occurs at all educational levels, because when this occurs mobile is often a disruptive element for the proper and successful development of classes. But it is also a phenomenon that modifies communication in current social life, being a problem associated with technological addiction with direct consequences in society.

The research delves into the first aspect, i.e., it is based on the search of the relationship between phubbing and the use of mobile applications when students are in class. The results obtained are impressive, including the following: 54% of students check their cell phone in classes when the professor or other classmates make their presentations.

Faced with such worrying data, it is important to reflect on its causes and effects, since it seems that the level of phubbing that occurs at the university can be defined as an important phenomenon. In this line, the study seems to corroborate that the way for students not to use the mobile device in class is associated with the rules established by the professor. This implies that the students have difficulties to self-regulate, which leads us to corroborate the need to continue research beyond addictions, in the way in which we must educate children, adolescents and young people to develop digital skills and responsible and critical use of technology. These aspects seem essential to prevent one of the main problems that derive from technology, and that overshadow the many benefits presented by the democratization of its use. These advances have involved the development of synchronous and asynchronous communication at a distance and, above all, the creation of networks between people who build collaborative societies.

Therefore, we hope that this monograph will contribute greatly to the advancement of the scientific area of educational technology, and its readers will enjoy and learn as much about technological additions and education as the editors have done in the process of elaborating it. We wholeheart-



edly thank *Revista Alteridad* and its editors for offering us this opportunity and their accompaniment in this intense and interesting challenge.

In the section Miscellaneous, García-Arce and Gutiérrez-Barba, considering that higher education institutions must implement the Sustainable Development Goals, and oriented to the change of the social, economic and environmental environments, in the article “Institutional philosophy and objectives of sustainable development”, they authors intended to analyze the philosophical framework of the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico. For this, by means of a descriptive hermeneutic study they analyzed the documents General Law, University Statute and Institutional Development Master Plan. They identified a broad set of actions and highlighted the need to incorporate a more holistic vision that includes sustainability as part of the guidelines.

In the article “Mathematical and digital competence of the future teacher using GeoGebra” conducted by García-Lázaro and Martín-Nieto, when noting the daily use of technology by university students, and that sometimes digital competencies are taken for granted, the authors evidenced the need for future teachers to use digital competence in learning contexts, hence it must be included during their academic training. The pre-experimental study with students at Rey Juan Carlos University allowed to identify a satisfactory result in the use of the GeoGebra application for acquiring geometric concepts such as axial, central symmetry, inversion, rotation, translation and homozgyosity.

From the Chilean context, Espinosa-Valenzuela *et al.*, in the article “Subjective distress and educational uncertainty during the COVID-19 pandemic”, emphasize the need to analyze the consequences of Covid-19 beyond strictly biomedical aspects, such as from the labor market, economic and subjective well-being of society. Among the results, high levels of uncertainty, anguish and fear among young people are still present due to the effects of the pandemic, particularly the death of close relatives, the economic problems of the family and the fear of losing the school year, among others.

The article “Classroom research exercise identifying differences between concepts of peace” by Rodríguez analyzes, from the Colombian context, the various conceptions of peace, a relevant topic worldwide. The study conducted from the perceptions of children between ten and fifteen years old in Colombia shows that there are different conceptions, some called stable and others unstable. What is relevant is the relationship they have with the community they live, which could allow new research in other contexts.

Although attitudes regarding the issue of disability is not recent, the article “Conceptions on disability of Spanish university students” by Leite *et al.*, emphasizes the conceptions of students about disability in the framework of the right to access, permanence and success; noting, on the one hand, an international increase in the presence of people with disabilities in higher education institutions; and on the other, the existence of a global movement that claims access, permanence and success of students with disabilities. The authors by applying the International Scale of Disability Concepts (EICD) to 676 students from various areas of the University of Seville, although they do not find significant differences in conceptions between undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as between participating students with and without disabilities, underline the predominance of social conceptions of disability, followed by medical aspects. They conclude by demonstrating the possibility of resignifying social conceptions of disability.

At the end of this editorial, there are armed conflicts such as the ones between Ukraine and Russia, Ethiopia, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar, Afghanistan and several African countries, which are generating serious humanitarian crises, characterized by injustice, insecurity, death; as well as lack



of access to basic resources such as water, food, or education needs. Those who suffer the most are women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities; in fact, in some places rape is used as a weapon of war, or child soldiers. But if Africa can be considered the “hottest region on the planet” in terms of conflict, and most deadly attacks take place in the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa, America has the highest rates of organized crime and gang crime. Most children, who witness torture and their relatives murdered, have to survive in destroyed countries, or live in displaced status, and years may pass without access to education, without adequate physical and psychological treatment.

Given this situation, some questions arise: Can international terrorist groups, armed groups engaged in civil wars, political instability, the lack of political will on the part of states to achieve peace, the scarcity of resources, make us believe that we live in a culture of violence? Is peace seen as a utopian possibility?

On the other hand, technology, especially artificial intelligence, is changing the way conflicts play out: more selective and anonymous cyber-attacks that reduce human physical intervention can control power plants, hospitals, airports, and generate disinformation; in this context, responsibility for life and death may depend not on human moral systems, but on complex data mining that lacks ethical considerations and compassion.

New questions arise: Are educational institutions mere spectators of conflict and violence? What are university institutions doing about violence and the use of technology? Perhaps the above questions are wrong if we consider that peace is the result of a social construction; the transformation of culture is a process that can take many years, and that also requires more just, supportive and ecological social and educational policies. It is a topic that has been opened for decades, but that requires new research and reflection.

We hope that our readers will enjoy this volume and we invite authors to publish with us.

