TikTok´s Impact on Police Training in Colombia

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Audiovisual platforms Social media Audiences Artificial intelligence TikTok Higher education Police	Applications that utilise artificial intelligence (AI) to generate content have become increasingly prevalent, exemplified by the popular platform TikTok. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of TikTok on the professional development of police cadets. This research employs a mixed method, adopting an exploratory and analytical approach to inquiry. To ascertain the findings, a survey was conducted with 590 cadets, who expressed a positive regard for the platform as a novel technological instrument in the realm of educational support. In conclusion, the use of TikTok in an appropriate manner and the strategic integration of its content into teaching can result in the tool becoming a valuable technological innovation aid.

1. Introduction

The advent of social networks at the end of the 20th century has seen exponential growth since the beginning of the 21st century, to the extent that they have become a dominant communication model with a profound impact on cyber-users. From passive spectators to active users who create content, the majority of which is in the form of videos, such as TikTok. This is because the majority of content generated on this platform is in the short video format, which is more visible to cyber-users who start at an early age. (ONTSI, 2022; Qustodio, 2023). Tiktok is one of the most popular social networking applications, especially among minors (Brown, 2022), which allows content to be uploaded by multiple users of the platform (Kid Matters Counseling, 2023).

Social networks are an integral part of the internet, functioning as a platform for technological innovation. They facilitate the interconnection of users on a massive scale, enabling the receipt, production and distribution of content as prosumers (González-Reyes, 2021), across a diverse range of media. The population of users of social media is growing rapidly, as evidenced by the report by We Are Social (2024), which shows that the number of users increased from 226 million in 2004 to 5 billion in 2024. TikTok was launched in 2016 and has since experienced exponential growth, with no global limits. These platforms of virtual technological innovation have led to the creation of bidirectional information for cyber-users to consume content (Galindo Rubio et al., 2023, p. 149), and to interact more actively by responding to new formats and mass media proposals (De Vicente Domínguez and Sierra Sánchez, 2022).

The influence of the content on the TikTok platform is evident in all social contexts, including the educational environment. Indeed, the use of these networks to optimise police training processes is evident in police training schools. However, it is evident that the information received from these contents is not always accurate and is sometimes subject to inappropriate and false information, such as fake news, as well as the distortion of the same information content. Consequently, it is of paramount importance for police officers to corroborate the veracity of the information that must be taken into account in the educational scenario.

Consequently, in the context of police training, both cybernetic centres and teachers in schools have had to adapt their pedagogical work to the new strategies and narratives brought by virtual platforms (Sierra Sánchez et al., 2020, p. 190). This is because they have become everyday sources of information that everyone can access (Cao, 2020, p. 272), including police cadets in their police training schools.

The target demographic of virtual platforms such as TikTok is young people (Zazo Correa and Martínez Fresneda, 2024, p. 2). This includes university students, who receive immediate information (Maldonado Pérez, 2024), which is often edited depending on the interests of those who create content. This particular situation is affected by the unique context of police training, as the content must be truthful and accurate, and much of it may be used as evidence in a specific police investigation case. In this context, the information obtained from a TikTok must be subjected to rigorous analysis to ensure the confidentiality and veracity of the information (Brigas, et al., 2023). Furthermore, the platform enables the largest audience to be reached in the shortest time, even going viral due to new forms of multimedia connection (Cyberwise, 2022).

Consequently, this research was conducted in the educational setting of a police training school with the objective of analysing the influence of the TikTok platform in the educational context of police cadets. To this end, a survey-type research instrument was employed to analyse the evaluative influence that police cadets have on the educational use of TikTok..

1.1. Justification

It is crucial for police educational institutions to have access to cutting-edge technological tools and social networks, as they play a pivotal role in the professional training of future police officers. This educational context necessitates the implementation of new technological devices to enhance interactivity in the classroom, particularly in the context of virtual learning scenarios across the disciplines of police training.

These are new educational realities that have emerged in response to the changing professional world and its interaction with work scenarios. In this context, it is pertinent to evaluate the role of platforms such as TikTok in the training of emerging generations of police officers. It is therefore

essential to be able to utilise these platforms and the subsequent content in order to enhance the quality of information and facilitate debate within the context of academic disciplinary training.

TikTok is the application with the highest rate of users in the world (Ruiz, 2024). This global incidence is a factor that must be considered when using its contents in the police educational scenario, with all that this implies in terms of debugging and analysis. Although TikTok is primarily a platform for entertainment, its content can also be utilized for educational purposes. Therefore, the key to effective integration lies in the ability of educators to implement it in a manner that fosters high-quality learning environments.

1.2. Objectives

In line with the aforementioned points, the overarching aim of this research is to examine the impact of the virtual platform TikTok on the professional training of police cadets. In this context, the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To identify the weighting given by cadets to the use of TikTok and its content modalities in training processes.
2. To determine the extent to which cadets understand TikTok as a platform for disseminating educational information.
3. To ascertain the students' perception of TikTok as a tool to support the learning process.

1.3. Questions

Similarly, the formulation of the research questions is informed by the objectives of the study. The following questions are posed:

1. What influence does the virtual platform TikTok have on the professional training of police cadets in terms of content?
2. What is the perception of police cadets regarding TikTok as a platform for disseminating educational information to support professional police training?
3. What is the cadets' evaluation of the utilisation of TikTok as a resource to facilitate the police training process?

2. TikTok Visual Platform

TikTok platform was created in 2016 in China under the name Douyin. Its presence in the social media market has led it to rank among the first places globally, thanks to the fact that millions of people have emerged who upload content daily and feed the platform with their content. The network has grown exponentially, particularly among young people with innovative multiscreen habits (Pérez Alaejos et al., 2021), who share the majority of their content in the form of short videos (Gallardo Camacho et al., 2023, p. 11).

The brief video format is based on the Skinner box, which allows access to brief videos according to content selection algorithms, contingent on the subject matter and the needs of the users. As in TikTok, there is a diversity of themes, styles and tones, and a series of supports are also used to make them more addictive (Rawlinson, 2023). These elements include stickers, filters, GIFs and musical backgrounds, among other aspects (De Moya Martínez et al., 2024). It is evident that the addictive nature of the platform arises from the algorithmic design of the TikTok platform, which is specifically configured to encourage users to watch videos in succession.

 As with other content creators on the TikTok platform, those who create content with the intention of entertaining and generating humorous environments do so with the knowledge that their content will be consumed by millions of users (Hebert, 2023). However, it is also evident that informative material is created on the platform (Sidorenko et al., 2023), as occurs with other accounts such as x, which has millions of users. Conversely, with regard to the prevailing landscape of traditional social media, such as television, radio, and print, the younger generation has demonstrated a preference for accessing informative content on social networks, such as the TikTok platform. The younger generations

have been socialised in an environment characterised by the pervasiveness of digital communication, where the immediacy of digital media is a defining feature (Álvarez-Alvarez and Del-Arco, 2023).

TikTok is associated with the broadcasting of short videos with the aim of entertaining users However, it also contributes to communicative processes focused on the production of new knowledge for which digital media literacy is of great importance and the acquisition of technological media skills (García-Roca and De Amo Sánchez-Fortún, 2023).

For those engaged in the act of content creation, this platform offers a unique opportunity to showcase their creative capacity, critical thinking abilities, and potential for achieving fame and influence.

3. Methodology

In accordance with the police education context, the research was approached from a mixed methodological perspective, drawing upon the systematisation of exploratory information derived from the application of an online survey and the analysis of the information. Furthermore, documentary material based on Scopus and other current databases was also employed.

The study population comprised cadets of the General Francisco de Paula Santander police school, with a sample size of 590 students. Participants were invited to complete a survey-based research instrument, which was made available via Google Forms for a period of four weeks. The instrument was distributed via email to the sample, with the prior consent of each participant. A non-probabilistic convenience sampling method was employed. The majority of the questions employed in the research were derived from the survey format provided by CIFE. This approach enabled the use of open questions for qualitative analysis and closed questions for the quantification of results.

The closed-ended questions were organised from 1 to 10 in order to assess the cadets' evaluation of the effectiveness of the TikTok video platform as a support tool for their professional training process. Accordingly, those who rated the TikTok platform the highest, with a score of 10, considered it to be outstanding. This rating was used as a reference for the majority of the questions.

4. Results

The application of the research instruments with the selected students and the subsequent creation of the database in Excel format and the generation of tables and graphs enabled the results of the research to be presented. In conclusion, the findings indicate that the police cadets have had some experience in the use of the TikTok tool as a support to their professional training process, as evidenced by graph number one.

A statistical approach was employed to analyse the grading data of students engaged in training processes supported by TikTok. The following section presents a selection of key statistical measures and an overall analysis:

Statistical Measures:

Minimum (Min): The minimum score recorded is 4. First Quartile (1st Qu.): The first quartile, which represents the value below which 25% of the data is found, is 8. In this order, the Median, which is the central value when the data is sorted, is 9. This means that 50% of the scores are below 9 and 50% are above. As for the Mean: The arithmetic mean of the grades is approximately 8.585. This is calculated by dividing the sum of all grades by the total number of students. With regard to the third quartile (3rd Qu.), which represents the value below which 75% of the data is found, it is 10. Similarly, the maximum (Max) corresponds to the highest recorded grade of 10.

Regarding the analysis of the data, the distribution of the ratings indicates that the majority of the cadets (470 out of 590, approximately 80%) rated 8 or higher. This suggests a generally positive assessment of the training practice supported by TikTok. In contrast, there are no ratings below 4, indicating that none of the students felt that the practice deserved a very low rating. Regarding the central tendency, The median and mean are situated at the upper end of the rating scale, indicating that the majority of cadets are highly satisfied with this training practice.

Regarding bias, the results indicate that the distribution is skewed towards high grades, with a higher number of students giving grades of 9 and 10. This is reflected in the fact that both the third quartile and the maximum quartile are 10.

From the above, it can be inferred that the practice of training processes supported by TikTok has been well received by the students, as indicated by the predominant high ratings. The absence of low ratings and the high number of 8-10 ratings suggest that students found this training method effective and satisfactory. This type of analysis can assist in understanding the effectiveness of new teaching methodologies and their acceptance among students. This analysis of results can also be seen in Graph 1.

Graph 1. Cadets' experience with TikTok.
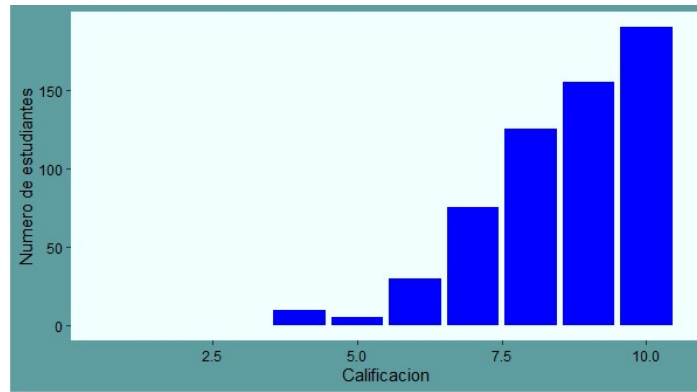
Source: Own elaboration.

Graph 1 illustrates that in practice, cadets utilise TikTok on a regular basis and that its consumption is high. This result indicates that only 10 of the 590 cadets consider that TikTok does not meet their expectations in terms of supporting their training process.

The subsequent graph was designed to investigate the cadets' assessment of TikTok prior to its incorporation as a support for their professional training process. This was then applied in the educational environment and the manner in which it was assumed. The findings indicate that the majority of cadets who participated in the research instrument before engaging with academic meetings supported by virtual platforms with technological innovation had a basic assessment of the TikTok platform. However, upon entering the educational practices, the TikTok platform was perceived as a didactic pedagogical support for the teaching-learning process by students, which demonstrates that this platform can be considered a valid tool to incorporate into educational practice.

Consequently, 71.2% of cadets acknowledge that TikTok is an optimal platform for supporting their professional training process. Similarly, 24.6% of the cadets are in the middle range when rating the use of TikTok. The highest scores are awarded by cadets when evaluating the use of TikTok as a tool to support educational activity. Implementation of TikTok as a support tool for the teaching-learning process is evidenced by a rating of 1.85.

Graph 2. Cadets' perception of TikTok as an educational tool
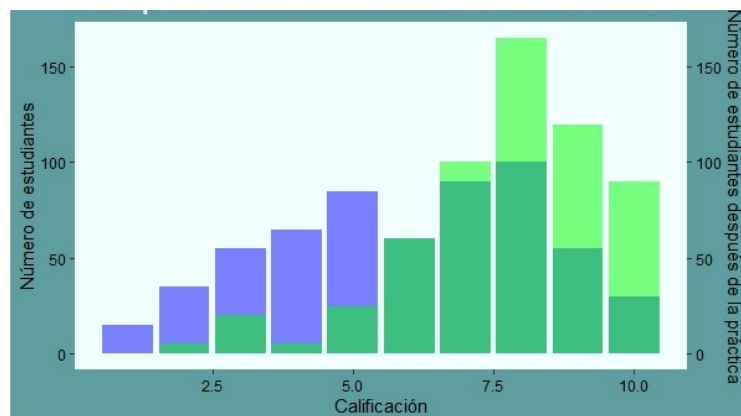
Source: Own elaboration.

In order to analyse the students' perception of TikTok as a tool to support the educational process before and after its application as a tool to support educational training, the following descriptive statistics and comparative analysis can be observed.

In terms of the descriptive statistical analysis, it can be observed that prior to the incorporation of TikTok as a tool to support educational activities within the police training school, the minimum value (Min) was 1, the first quartile (1st Qu.) was 4, the median (Median) was 6, the mean (Mean) was 5.966, the third quartile (3rd Qu.) was 8, and the maximum value (Max) was 10. Conversely, following the implementation of TikTok within the educational setting, it has been possible to ascertain that the minimum value (Min) was 2, the first quartile (1st Qu.) was 7, the median (Median) was 8, the mean (Mean) was 7.866, the third quartile (3rd Qu.) was 9, and the maximum value (Max) was 10. The third quartile (3rd Qu.): 8; the maximum (Max): 10. Conversely, following the implementation of the TikTok platform in the educational setting, it has been possible to determine that the minimum (Min): 2. In this order, the first quartile (1st Qu.): 7. The median: The mean is 7.754, with a third quartile (3rd Qu.) of 9 and a maximum (Max) of 10.

With regard to the comparative analysis, it is possible to establish the distribution of ratings from the change in low ratings before the implementation of TikTok. It is evident that there are cadets who rated TikTok with 1, 2, 3 and 4. Following the educational intervention, the proportion of ratings of 1 and 2 decreased significantly, with one rating disappearing entirely and the other dropping from 35 to 5.

In contrast, the proportion of high scores increased considerably, with the number of students rating 9 and 10 increasing from 55 and 30, respectively, to 120 and 90, respectively. Conversely, the median and mean scores increased following the educational practice. The median score increased from 6 to 8, while the mean score increased from 5.966 to 7.754. This indicates an overall improvement in the students' perception.

With regard to the graphical analysis (non-visual, descriptive of Graph 2), it can be observed that prior to the practice, the distribution of the ratings exhibited a considerable degree of dispersion, with a central tendency situated around 5-6. Furthermore, the majority of the ratings were concentrated between 4 and 8.

Following the practice, however, the distribution exhibited a notable shift towards higher ratings. This was evidenced by the fact that a greater number of students rated between 7 and 10, with a discernible peak observed at 8 and 9. It can be concluded that there is an improvement in perception, as evidenced by the significant improvement in the students' perception of the practice with TikTok. This is reflected in the increase of high ratings and the reduction of low ratings. In terms of the distribution of grades, the concentration of high grades after practice suggests that students found TikTok to be more useful and effective as a formative tool after having used it. The data indicates a positive impact of the use of TikTok in the learning process, with a noticeable improvement in student ratings. These analyses indicate that TikTok can be an effective tool for improving students' perception and satisfaction with training processes.

However, a comparative investigation of those who had and had not used TikTok to support the educational process revealed a differential growth in those who had initially expressed a negative assessment of the use of TikTok. This change in opinion was attributed to the recognition of the benefits of using the platform in the educational process.

Graph 3. TikTok as a platform for disseminating educational content.
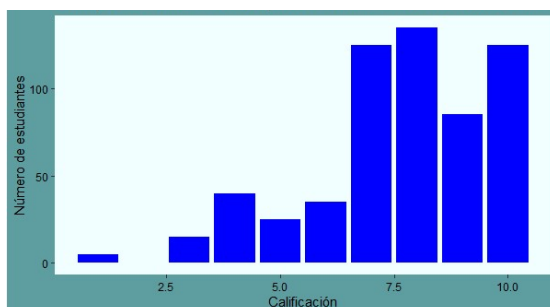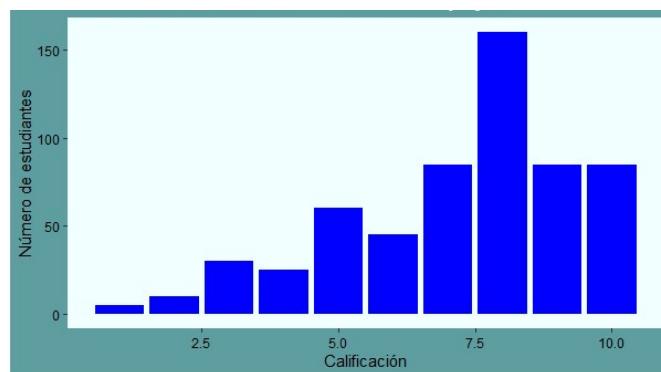

Source: Own elaboration.

The data presented indicates the level of students' comprehension of TikTok as a platform for disseminating educational information, with a rating scale of 1-10 utilized for this purpose. The lowest possible value is 1, which indicates that there are at least some students who have a very limited understanding of TikTok as an educational platform. The first quartile (Q1) is 7, indicating that 25% of students have a score of 7 or less in their understanding of TikTok for educational purposes. The median is 8, indicating that 50% of students have a rating of 8 or less. The mean value is approximately 7.653, indicating that, on average, students demonstrate a moderate to high understanding of TikTok as an educational platform. The third quartile (Q3) is 9, indicating that 75% of the students have a score of 9 or less. Accordingly, given that the maximum value is 10, it can be inferred that some students have a comprehensive understanding of TikTok as an educational platform.

The statistical analysis demonstrates that the majority of students possess a moderate to high comprehension of TikTok as a conduit for disseminating educational information, with a subset of students exhibiting a lesser degree of understanding and a minority demonstrating a comprehensive grasp.

In terms of the valuation of the TikTok platform in relation to the educational training process, the average rating given by cadets is 7.66. A total of 10.1% of respondents did not rate TikTok highly. Similarly, another 10.1% of respondents to the survey rated TikTok moderately, while 44.0% acknowledged its notable and outstanding utility. Similarly, 35.6% of the police student population, representing the majority, significantly values the use of the platform to support their professional training process.

With regard to the results obtained in Graph 4, the following weights can be established:

Graph 4. Weighted value of cadets regarding TikTok's modalities to support educational processes.

Source: Own elaboration.

With regard to the statistical analysis of the data provided on the students' assessment of the modalities offered by TikTok to support the educational processes, the following variables can be seen: The minimum value is 1, which indicates that a subset of cadets has a particularly low valuation of TikTok's educational modalities. The first quartile (Q1) is 6, indicating that 25% of the students have rated TikTok's educational modalities as 6 or below. The median value is 8, indicating that 50% of the students have a rating of 8 or less. Consequently, the mean value is approximately 7.247, indicating that, on average, students rate TikTok's educational modalities positively, although with a tendency towards the upper end of the middle range.

The third quartile (Q3) is 9, indicating that 75% of students have a rating of 9 or less. Similarly, the maximum value is 10, indicating that some students have rated TikTok's educational modalities at the highest possible level.

In conclusion, students tend to rate the educational modalities offered by TikTok in a positive manner, with the majority of ratings concentrated in the upper end of the middle range. Additionally, a small number of students have rated the modalities as the maximum possible.

The content created on the TikTok platform exhibits distinctive stylistic and tonal characteristics that imbue the platform with unique properties. When cadets have the opportunity to utilise this platform, they perceive it to align with their expectations for professional training. In this regard, 170

cadets who responded to the survey rated the platform as outstanding, which corresponds to 28.8% of the respondents.

With regard to the utilisation of visual representation formats, the rating for TikTok is 6.5 points, which represents one of the lowest ratings given by cadets in relation to this platform. This information can be observed in Graph 5.

Graph 5. Value that cadets place on the use of visual representation formats to support training processes.
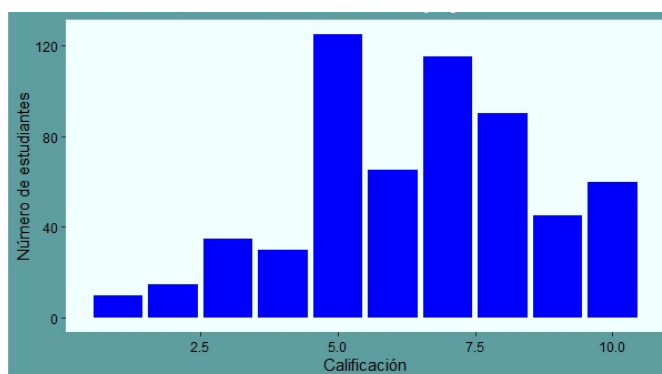
Source: Own elaboration.

The statistical analysis of the data provided on the students' assessment of the use of visual representation formats to support learning processes is presented below. The minimum value is 1, which indicates that at least some students have a very low evaluation of the use of stickers or GIFs for educational purposes. Similarly, the first quartile (Q1) is 5, indicating that 25% of the students have assigned a rating of 5 or less to the use of visual representation formats for educational purposes. The median value is 7, indicating that 50% of the students have a rating of 7 or less.

Additionally, the mean, or average, is approximately 6.492, indicating that, on average, students have a moderate appreciation of the use of these formats for educational purposes. The third quartile (Q3) is 8, indicating that 75% of the students have a rating of 8 or less. The maximum value, 10, implies that some students highly value the use of these formats for educational purposes.

In conclusion, students exhibit a moderate appreciation of the use of visual representation formats to support training processes, with some demonstrating a more positive valuation than others. Consequently, the value attributed by cadets to the utilisation of these applications is not particularly high, as evidenced by the fact that only 17.8% recognise the successful application of these formats, while 36.5% hold a notable valuation of the use of this platform and the visual representation format applications. Furthermore, 30.5% of students concur that these applications should be employed in educational settings, while 15.2% are opposed to their integration into the educational environments of police training institutions.

5. Discussion

The results of the surveys conducted with police cadets indicate that the utilisation of the TikTok video platform as a pedagogical tool in professional police training is an effective approach.

The results of the analysis indicate that there is an overall positive assessment of this innovative academic exercise supported by virtual tools (Fajardo Pascagaza and Serrano, 2022).

The target population of the research is comprised of individuals belonging to the millennial and centennial generations, who have been identified as having a high level of empathy with the languages used on social networks (Fajardo, 2018). The application of this platform has been shown to result in enhanced outcomes in the teaching and learning processes (Fajardo Pascagaza and Bohórquez, 2019b). Consequently, it is perceived as an effective means of introducing innovation and facilitating pedagogical and didactic changes within the educational context (Fajardo Pascagaza, 2019c; Wang et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the proposal presents a challenge to teachers and their traditional teaching practices, as the new educational scenarios demand new readings and narratives to disseminate disciplinary knowledge. The TikTok platform is an effective tool for achieving this objective (Hernández Plaza,

2021). For educators, the integration of such technological innovations (Fajardo Pascagaza, 2019a) in a virtual setting presents a unique set of challenges that demand creativity and motivation when imparting knowledge (Acevedo-Borrega et al., 2022; Peláez Barrios and Vernetta Santana, 2021). Additionally, it offers an opportunity to foster learning between teachers and students (Hartung et al., 2023).

Some authors, such as Nguyen and Diederich (2023), posit that platforms like TikTok bridge the educational divide with traditional formalities (Aguilar and Acosta-Banda, 2020), suggesting its indispensable integration into the educational landscape. However, Celik et al., (2023) view TikTok as a non-educational medium and advocate for its optimization to align with the teaching-learning processes (Rahimullah et al., In 2022, the use of TikTok in educational settings may be problematic due to the potential for inaccurate or misleading information to be disseminated.

The judicious use of TikTok in educational settings can help to mitigate the potential harms associated with its overuse (Chao et al., 2023). It can also facilitate the development of essential communicative and learning skills, including the capacity to learn independently (Acevedo-Borrega et al., 2022). Furthermore, it can motivate students to engage in meaningful learning through the use of digital components (Yélamos-Guerra, 2022).

TikTok responds to a cultural and social phenomenon of great importance in today's world, especially in the educational context. The majority of cyber-users are young people, given their chronological age (Tobeña, 2020). They interact in the educational environment as a tool for information and creation of content associated with tasks according to the disciplinary areas of knowledge (Marín-Díaz et al., In 2019, the educational environment was identified as a potential area of application for this emerging technology of a creative nature, which generates participatory environments (Nava, 2021; Del Carmen et al., 2022). These environments have the potential to improve communicative processes related to learning (Darvin, 2022).

6. Conclusions

In order to accommodate the evolving landscape of media ecosystems, it is imperative to explore novel avenues and paradigms of technological innovation that can effectively address the unique demands of virtual learning scenarios, which facilitate a more intimate engagement with the disciplinary knowledge imparted in police training institutions.

In this context, it is crucial for police training cadets to develop the ability to distinguish between valid and invalid information sources and to identify and challenge the use of fake news. This will enable them to utilise accurate and timely information to construct informed and coherent arguments in their academic pursuits. In this manner, police cadets are able to assimilate the content in accordance with the disciplinary and doctrinal correspondence.

On a daily basis, police cadets utilise the TikTok platform to view videos, the majority of which provide general information and entertainment. When this tool of virtual innovation is applied to support educational work, it opens up a plethora of didactic and pedagogical possibilities that enrich the educational work. Nevertheless, the utilisation of this social network, with its diverse applications, renders it more dynamic. The filters and visual representation formats permit the content to be more entertaining without compromising the rigour of the knowledge.

TikTok is a platform for social technological innovation that reaches a wider audience of young people who have moved away from traditional means of communication and require other more agile, more interactive, more viral, more creative communication formalities that are more in line with their generational contexts. In this context, new challenges and changes are posed for teachers in their educational practices, requiring them to implement this type of technological innovation in order to make their academic meetings more effective and attractive. Social networks such as TikTok can therefore be seen as an articulating axis for the presentation of new knowledge.

However, given the extensive content available on this platform, it is essential that cadets develop critical, ethical and creative thinking skills. This will enable them to recognise the value of the content and consolidate their disciplinary learning, which is essential for providing police service and creating a healthy environment for coexistence and citizen security.

The data provided and the analysis conducted indicate that the use of platforms such as TikTok provides significant support for the learning of cadets. While there are differences in the perception and appreciation of various features of TikTok for educational purposes, such as the dissemination of educational information, the educational modalities offered and the use of visual representation formats to support training processes, the data suggest that students positively value the usefulness of TikTok in the educational environment.

Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that the efficacy of utilising TikTok or other social platforms for educational purposes may vary contingent on the content, the manner in which they are presented, and the learner's interaction with them. Furthermore, it is essential to consider the quality and veracity of the information shared on these platforms.

In conclusion, when employed in an appropriate and strategic manner, platforms such as TikTok can be valuable tools to support student learning, as they provide an engaging and accessible medium for knowledge sharing and active participation in education.

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