IMPACT OF AUDIOVISUAL CONTENT CONSUMPTION ON THE SELF-ESTEEM OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Audiovisual content, including movies, series, and social networking videos, play a crucial role in the personal and social development of college students, underscoring the importance of understanding their impact on student well-being. This study aimed to identify trends that contribute to the development of educational strategies and guidelines that improve the psychological health of the student community. A sample of 601 students, aged 16 to 27 years, was analyzed using self-esteem and audiovisual media consumption questionnaires. The results reveal that moderate and selective consumption of content, especially movies, is associated with higher self-esteem. On the contrary, excessive consumption and preference for certain contents, such as series, are associated with lower self-esteem. These results underscore the importance of conscious media consumption, urging students to select content that promotes their emotional health.

1. Introduction

In the current digital era, the consumption of audiovisual content has become an integral part of the daily lives of university students, influencing not only their leisure time, but also their psychological well-being and self-perception. The central problem of this research is to demonstrate the impact of this consumption on the self-esteem of Peruvian university students. With the rise of e-learning driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, exposure to digital media has escalated, creating an urgent need to understand the psychosocial repercussions it entails.

Audiovisual content, which includes movies, series and videos in social networks, is material that combines visual and auditory elements intended to be consumed and experienced by an audience. This variety of formats offers diverse experiences that capture the attention of viewers, influencing their perception and experience of the world (Martín-Romo & Belinchón, 2022; Rozados Lorenzo, 2022). Cinema is defined as art and entertainment that tells stories or expresses ideas through sequences of moving images accompanied by sound. This category includes films exhibited in theaters or accessible through digital media, distinguished by their ability to offer immersive experiences through the combination of visual, sound and narrative elements (Espinal-Monsalve et al., 2019; Rozados Lorenzo, 2022). In research on audiovisual consumption, cinema is analyzed as a distinct entity because of its unique impact on self-esteem.

On the other hand, a series is defined as a narrative work that is presented in successive episodes, each of which is part of a larger plot that unfolds over a season or several seasons (Pérez de Valdivia et al., 2016). This category can encompass a wide variety of genres, including drama, comedy, science fiction, and documentary, among others, and are distributed through traditional television channels, streaming platforms, and other digital media. Social media videos are defined as short or long video segments specifically designed to be shared and viewed on social media platforms. These can vary in genre, format, and purpose, including tutorials, vlogs (video blogs), reviews, entertainment clips, educational content, and more (Arroyo, 2023).

Audiovisual contents play a crucial role in education, facilitating the understanding of concepts at different levels of specificity and enriching the learning process by stimulating essential skills. Infante Jaras (2017) highlights that these resources, by integrating acoustic and optical elements, function as valuable complements to traditional tools in teaching, enhancing reflection and inquiry in students. However, the limited audiovisual literacy compromises the effectiveness of these materials, according to Makhlouf Akl & Iñigo Dehud (2022), which underscores the need to incorporate strategies in the curriculum that improve the quality and use of these resources.

In addition, the study by Başkaya et al. (2023) establishes a link between self-esteem, academic performance and emotional well-being, highlighting how the interpretation of success and failure in the media can affect these dimensions in students. This interaction becomes even more relevant in the context of the work of Krupa-Kotara et al. (2023), which evidences the importance of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle in improving college self-esteem. This research emphasizes how the representation of bodies in the media influences students' self-image and self-esteem, highlighting the significant role that audiovisual content can play in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards one's own body.

In the university environment, these media play a fundamental role, acting as catalysts of information and education, which enriches the identity and values of students. Audiovisual production is considered an effective pedagogical strategy, providing young people with a platform to express themselves and connect with their educational environment (Vermelho et al., 2015; Yiyi et al., 2023). However, interacting with audiovisual content also presents challenges, especially when college students are confronted with often unattainable standards and ideals, which can lead to unfavorable comparisons and negatively affect their self-esteem (Forniés & Juliá-Sanchis, 2023). The concern extends to how media shapes and reflects culture and values, and how representation and engagement with these contents affect self-esteem, in a context where social comparison and constant feedback on social networks are ubiquitous (Angulo Quiñonez, 2022; Başkaya et al., 2023; Garzón Clemente et al., 2019; Mayorca-Martínez et al., 2023).

Self-esteem, in the university context, influences aspects such as academic performance, emotional and social well-being of students. It is defined as the subjective valuation that a person has of

him/herself, impacting how he/she faces challenges and opportunities in university life. Monteiro et al. (2022) highlight its importance for emotional adjustment and academic performance. Rosenberg (1965) considers it a fundamental attitude towards oneself, and Pillaca (2019) links positive self-esteem with social adaptation and happiness, while low self-esteem is associated with risky behaviors and addictions, especially in the digital environment (Nie et al., 2017).

A balanced self-esteem, which incorporates both positive and negative aspects, contributes to the formation of individuals who are more resilient, confident, and capable of facing the challenges of college life successfully (Simkin & Pérez-Marín, 2018). This balance allows students to develop greater self-acceptance, a realistic perception of themselves, a greater ability to overcome obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the university experience (Sepúlveda-Páez et al., 2021). Almansour (2023) advocates educational programs that strengthen the self-esteem of university students. Educational institutions, therefore, should develop strategies to strengthen student self-esteem, facilitating their academic and personal success.

Global research has shed light on how the consumption of these media impacts students' self-esteem. In Europe Forniés & Juliá-Sanchis (2023) highlight the negative impact of social networks on body image and how self-esteem can be affected by feedback on these platforms, a crucial aspect in the university context where image and self-esteem are especially relevant, while Romero-Rodríguez et al. (2020) warn about the dangers of excessive use of mobile devices and networks for student self-esteem. Valkenburg et al. (2021) and Al-Ghafri et al. (2016) indicated that the impact of social networks on student self-esteem varies, with both positive and negative effects, while acknowledging that the individual experience may vary depending on how social networks are used. In Asia, Yiyi et al. (2023) examined how short videos affect college students' self-esteem and body perception. Alsunni & Latif (2022) studied the impact of excessive technology use on self-esteem, while Zainuddin et al. (2022) found no significant effect of social networking time on self-esteem, suggesting the influence of other factors.

In Ecuador, Angulo Quiñonez (2022) highlights the connection between self-esteem and academic efficiency in the university environment, suggesting that robust self-esteem is a potential driver of success in studies. This link accentuates the relevance of establishing learning environments that promote not only educational excellence but also the emotional well-being and self-confidence of students. On the other hand, in Colombia, research by Tabares et al. (2020) associates' self-esteem with general mental health and with the prevention of serious risks such as suicide. This finding emphasizes the importance of self-esteem for the psychological integrity of university students and stresses the importance of addressing and mitigating those factors that may impair it, considering its significant impact on student safety and well-being.

In Peru, a similar trend has been observed. Mayorca-Martínez et al. (2023) and Puma-Chavez et al. (2022) have highlighted the relationship between the use of social networks and self-esteem, as well as the role of improvisational music therapy in improving student well-being Alburqueque et al. (2022). However, there remains a need to understand in depth how time spent consuming audiovisual content and the choice of different types of media specifically affect college students' self-esteem.

This study aims to address the gap in understanding how the amount of time spent consuming different types of audiovisual content affects college students' self-esteem. Using advanced analytical methods, such as ANOVA and Tukey HSD, it seeks to disaggregate and examine variations in self-esteem associated with various forms of audiovisual consumption. The purpose is to identify specific patterns and generate an in-depth understanding that can serve as a foundation for designing educational interventions and policies focused on improving the psychological well-being of college students.

2. Method

2.1. Research design

The research design adopted was cross-sectional and descriptive, non-experimental in nature. Non-probabilistic and intentional sampling was used to select the study participants.

2.2. Participants

A total of 601 undergraduate students from the Chimbote campus of a private university in northern Peru participated in the study. Of this sample, the number of males (n=317; 53%) and females 47.3% (n=284; 47%). In terms of age, n= 428 with ages between 18 and 22 years (88%); n=62 with ages between 22 and 26 years (10%) and n= 2% with ages 27 years and older. In terms of professional careers: n=341 were enrolled in Engineering and Architecture programs (56%); n=132 were enrolled in Accounting and Finance (23%) and n=128 in careers related to Science and Humanities (21%). Regarding their employment status: they reported working 40 hours per week (n=132; 22%), 20 hours per week (n=341; 58%) and (n=128; 20%) did not work.

2.3. Instruments

The study used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RES), recognized for its robustness and reliability, with an internal consistency of 0.77 and a reproducibility coefficient of 0.90, to measure the self-esteem of university students. This tool, which offers four response options from "never" to "always", allows rating positive self-esteem on a scale of 1 to 4 and scores negative self-esteem items inversely, facilitating an accurate assessment of the perception of self-esteem. In addition, a sociodemographic form designed ad hoc and validated by experts was used to collect data on age, gender, academic semester, career and working day, as well as specific questions on audiovisual media consumption, including time spent daily and preferred types of content such as series, movies or videos on social networks.

2.4. Procedure

Before starting data collection, participants were provided with a clear description of the objective of the study, ensuring their understanding and informed consent for their participation. The voluntary and anonymous nature of their contribution was emphasized, guaranteeing confidentiality and compliance with Law 29733 on personal data protection in Peru. The questionnaires, accessible through a link distributed by QR code, were designed to be completed online in an estimated time of 12 to 15 minutes. During the completion of the questionnaires, a researcher was available to assist and ensure the correct development of the process, although no incidents or difficulties were reported by the participants.

2.5. Data analysis

For data analysis, Microsoft Excel and SPSSv26 software were used, applying descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including ANOVA, in order to meet the established objectives. Considering the central limit theorem, it was assumed that, given a sample size greater than 30, the sample distribution approximates a normal one, which justifies the use of parametric tests ANOVA and Tukey HSD for the inferential analysis of the data.

3. Results

This section presents the research findings, which are in line with the proposed objectives. It begins with a descriptive analysis of the variables, followed by the application of ANOVA and the Tukey HSD test for the inferential analysis of the data.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of self-esteem levels, time and type of consumption of audiovisual content.
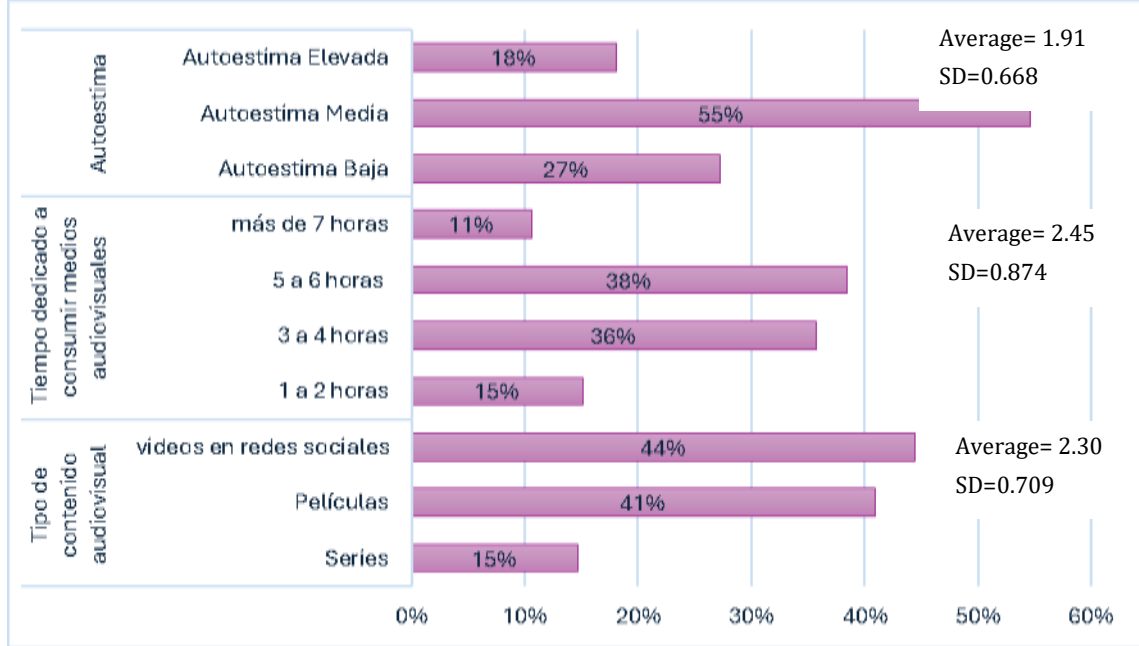
Source: Own elaboration

Using a scale of 1 to 3 to measure self-esteem, a mean of 1.91 was found, with a standard deviation of 0.668, indicating a concentration of responses around the medium level of self-esteem, which is reported by 55% of the students. In addition, 27% of the participants indicated having low self-esteem and 18% reported high levels, suggesting an inclination toward higher levels of self-esteem among the population studied.

In terms of audiovisual content consumption, students spend between 1 and 4 hours per day, with a mean of 2.45 hours and a standard deviation of 0.874. 36% of students consume 3 to 4 hours per day, and 38% spend 5 to 6 hours, which shows a preference for moderate to high consumption. A smaller segment, 15%, watch audiovisual content for 1 to 2 hours, and 11% watch more than 7 hours a day.

The preference of university students for the type of audiovisual content is concentrated in movies and videos on social networks, with a mean of 2.30 and a standard deviation of 0.709, indicating a slight preference for videos on social networks over movies. Forty-four percent of students favor videos on social networks, while 41% prefer movies and only 15% opt for series, reflecting a varied selection of content in their viewing habits.

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out to investigate whether the amount of time spent watching series, movies or videos on social networks exerts a significant influence on self-esteem levels. The results revealed F-values of 170.180 for time spent consuming audiovisual content and 226.844 for types of content, with a significance value ($p < 0.000$) in both cases, indicating a statistically significant influence on self-esteem due to both time and type of content consumed. To further explore what the specific differences are between the groups, the Tukey HSD (Honest Significant Difference) post hoc test was subsequently applied, allowing precise identification of between which particular groups these significant influences are manifested.

Table 2. Multiple comparisons of the difference in levels of self-esteem by number of hours spent: Tukey's HSD method analysis.

(I) Dedicated hours	(J) Dedicated hours	Difference of means (I-J)	Error	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
					Lower limit	Upper limit
1 to 2 hours	3 to 4 hours	-,880*	,059	,000	-1,03	-,73
	5 to 6 hours	-1,213*	,062	,000	-1,37	-1,05
	+ of 7 hours	-2,000*	,113	,000	-2,29	-1,71
3 to 4 hours	1 to 2 hours	,880*	,059	,000	,73	1,03
	5 to 6 hours	-,333*	,045	,000	-,45	-,22
	+ of 7 hours	-1,120*	,105	,000	-1,39	-,85
5 to 6 hours	1 to 2 hours	1,213*	,062	,000	1,05	1,37
	3 to 4 hours	,333*	,045	,000	,22	,45
	+ of 7 hours	-,787*	,106	,000	-1,06	-,51
+ of 7 hours	1 to 2 hours	2,000*	,113	,000	1,71	2,29
	3 to 4 hours	1,120*	,105	,000	,85	1,39
	5 to 6 hours	,787*	,106	,000	,51	1,06

*. The difference in means is significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Own elaboration

The results in Table 2 highlight a negative correlation between the amount of time university students spend consuming audiovisual content and their self-esteem. Specifically, those who dedicate 1 to 2 hours to audiovisuals report significantly higher self-esteem compared to those who invest more time. The self-esteem of this group is higher by 0.880 units compared to those who watch 3 to 4 hours, by 1.213 units compared to those who watch 5 to 6 hours, and by 2.000 units compared to those who watch more than 7 hours. These differences are statistically significant and the confidence intervals excluding zero highlight the strength of these results. In addition, self-esteem is observed to progressively decrease as the time spent with audiovisual content increases. These patterns underline the importance of a moderate consumption of audiovisual content for higher self-esteem among university students, it is considered a valuable data for the development of student support programs in university contexts.

Table 3. Multiple comparisons of the difference in levels of self-esteem by content type: Tukey's HSD method analysis.

(I) Type of audiovisual content	(J) Type of audiovisual content	Difference of means (I-J)	Desv. Error	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
					Lower limit	Upper limit
Series	Films	-,869*	,061	,000	-1,01	-,73
	Videos in social networks	-1,368*	,065	,000	-1,52	-1,22
Films	Series	,869*	,061	,000	,73	1,01
	Videos in social networks	-,500*	,046	,000	-,61	-,39
Videos in social networks	Series	1,368*	,065	,000	1,22	1,52
	Films	,500*	,046	,000	,39	,61

*. The difference in means is significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Own elaboration

The findings of the Tukey HSD test clearly illustrate the relationship between the type of audiovisual content consumed by university students and their levels of self-esteem (Table 3). Specifically, it is observed that students who consume series tend to report significantly lower levels of self-esteem compared to those who prefer movies or videos on social networks. Self-esteem is notably lower in those who watch series, in contrast to both movie fans and consumers of content on social networks, reflecting important and statistically significant differences that suggest how the type of content can influence self-image. Nevertheless, movies and social media videos are associated with higher levels of self-esteem than series, with social media content standing out as having the most positive relationship with self-

esteem, suggesting that shared experiences and perhaps the nature of social interaction on these platforms may play an important role in this regard.

4. Discussion

The study addresses the dynamics between audiovisual media consumption and self-esteem in the university context. The results reveal a moderate positive association between the hours devoted to this activity and the type of audiovisual content. This finding suggests that students tend to invest more time in certain content, which could reflect a choice linked to their personal preferences and, potentially, to their self-esteem. This observation is echoed in the work of Al-Ghafri et al. (2016), who reported elevated self-esteem among active users of social networks and postulated an overall positive effect of these media on self-esteem. However, it is crucial to contrast these results with those of (Zainuddin et al., 2022), whose study found no significant influence of time spent on social networks on the self-esteem of university students, highlighting the possible influence of additional factors on this dynamic.

The study also revealed an inverse correlation between time spent consuming audiovisual content and self-esteem: those students who limit their consumption tend to show stronger self-esteem. This finding is consistent with research by Valkenburg et al. (2021), who observed lower levels of self-esteem in adolescents who spend a lot of time on social networks. Similarly, research on smartphone addiction, such as those conducted by Romero-Rodriguez et al. (2020) and Alsunni & Latif (2022), indicate negative effects of excessive use of these devices on self-esteem, highlighting the importance of adopting balanced and conscious media consumption habits. Additionally, Portillo et al. (2021) found that higher social network addiction correlates with lower self-esteem and higher levels of anxiety, emphasizing the importance of investigating the connection between self-esteem, anxiety and problematic social network use.

The analysis also explored how different types of audiovisual content impact self-esteem. It is found that students who prefer movies have higher self-esteem than fans of series. This finding aligns with the research of Espinal-Monsalve et al. (2019), which suggests an association between frequency of movie attendance and higher educational level. It is proposed that this trend could be influenced by the increasing interest and academic recommendations that students receive as they advance in their careers, thus enriching their appreciation and understanding of cinema. Students who prefer videos on social networks present higher levels of self-esteem compared to series or movie fans. This pattern is consistent with the findings of Martín-Romo (2022), who reflect on the influence of social networks on youth behavior during their exposure and use. However, one must consider the warnings of studies such as that of Forniés & Juliá-Sanchis (2023) on the detrimental effect that networks can have on body image and self-esteem, reinforced by the analysis of Yiyi et al. (2023) in the context of the impact of short videos on self-esteem and body perception.

The findings highlight the critical importance of designing educational and wellness programs that strengthen the self-esteem of university students, as pointed out by Almansour (2023). Likewise, they highlight the need to establish educational environments that prioritize both academic excellence and emotional well-being, in accordance with the observations of Angulo Quiñonez (2022). These results underscore the relevance of carefully examining the impact of audiovisual content consumption on self-esteem within the university context. Furthermore, they emphasize the urgency of continuing to explore and understand how audiovisual media influence young adults at a critical stage of their personal and educational development.

5. Conclusions

This study delves into the complex dynamics between audiovisual media consumption and the self-esteem of university students, evidencing a moderately positive relationship based on both the amount of time devoted to these media and the type of content chosen. It suggests that students gravitate towards content that reflects their personal tastes and, possibly, influences their perception of themselves. This observation is consistent with previous research highlighting the beneficial impact of social media interaction on self-esteem, although it is crucial to recognize the role of other factors in this equation.

On the other hand, an inverse relationship was identified between the overconsumption of audiovisual content and self-esteem, implying that a moderate approach to these media could promote better self-esteem. This pattern harmonizes with previous studies that point out the negative consequences of excessive immersion in social networks and the use of mobile devices on the perception of self-worth. The analysis also highlights how different types of content affect self-esteem differently, finding that preferences for movies or videos on social networks are associated with higher self-esteem compared to the consumption of series, an effect that could be mediated by factors such as educational level and academic exposure.

However, it is important to note the limitations of this study, including its focus on a specific population of university students, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other demographic groups. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not allow us to establish causal relationships between audiovisual media consumption and self-esteem. Future research should consider longitudinal designs to explore these dynamics over time and broaden the sample to include a greater diversity of educational and cultural contexts.

These findings emphasize the need to promote balanced media consumption practices and develop interventions that improve student self-esteem, creating educational environments that balance academic excellence with emotional well-being. This research contributes to the understanding of how the consumption of audiovisual content affects the personal and academic development of young people, highlighting the importance of continuing to investigate these complex relationships.

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