

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN THE AI ERA: SOCIAL MEDIA, ALGORITHMS, AND YOUTH**Juan de Dios Martínez Villarreal and *Gloria Elena Martínez Pérez**

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Abstract

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in social media has generated a new paradigm in political communication, which in turn, has had important repercussions on the democratic system as a whole and on the new generations of citizens who are the most frequent users of these platforms. In this sense, the present article, with both qualitative and quantitative components, has as its main objective to identify whether the use of AI in social media and the bias that could be generated influence the political decisions of young citizens. The main findings of the research indicate, firstly, that young people have an ambivalent view of social media: they consider them indispensable tools for informing themselves, disseminating news, and engaging in political matters, but at the same time, they believe that the use of AI on these platforms could generate bias through the echo chamber or filter bubble, which would influence their political decisions. In this sense, the new paradigm represented by social media and AI requires young people with critical thinking and the abilities and skills to identify reliable sources and biases that could be present on the different platforms.

Keywords: Political communication, Social media, Artificial intelligence, Political bias.

INTRODUCTION

Political communication is indispensable for the development of democracies, and artificial intelligence (AI) in social media has revolutionized it. In this sense, the algorithms used by these platforms have turned them not only into a means of communication but also into a reservoir of information, since they would be reproducing data that the users themselves generate; although we should not forget that such information is predictive, as it is produced in relation to data drawn from the past (Innerarity and Colomina, 2020). Social media are platforms that allow us, in a digital environment, to engage in activities such as expressing opinions and participating in debate forums, i.e., interacting with different users. The above has allowed youth to have a space for discussion, consumption, and dissemination of information. On the other hand, it is important to note that the presence of AI in social media could also be questioned, since the use of algorithms to segment the population could limit autonomy or freedom in decision-making by their users; that is, AI and the segmentation present in social media would bring about a loss of sovereignty and freedom of citizens as they direct information according to their preferences, limiting access to information and to diverse views of reality; since they recommend or suggest content according to our choices. An example of this were the 2016 United States elections, where Donald Trump's campaign team may have influenced citizens' decisions thanks to the algorithms used by AI as a tool to profile and exploit the weaknesses of Facebook users, sending them messages aligned with their fears and vulnerabilities to influence their voting intention in the election (Valle-Jiménez and Pinilla-Escobar, 2023). It should be noted that in Mexico, young people represent the demographic that uses the Internet the most, according to the 2022 National Survey on Availability and Use of Information Technologies in Households (ENDUTIH).

The survey indicates that youths aged 18 to 24 are the largest group of Internet users, with 95.1% using the Internet. Regarding social media use in Mexico, based on the study "Political Culture of Democracy in Mexico and the Americas, 2018/19: Taking the Pulse of Democracy," it can be stated that 55.1% of the country's adult population uses WhatsApp and 47.9% uses Facebook. Among social media users, WhatsApp is the most frequently used platform, with 79.9% of its users accessing it daily, 60.6% using Facebook, and 38.3% using X (formerly Twitter). Social media plays a crucial role in expressing opinions and obtaining information across the wide range of topics in which individuals may engage, from daily news, fashion, and cinema to political matters. Regarding the AI used in social media, it has enabled the identification of tastes, preferences, patterns, trends and the behaviors of its users, thanks to the algorithms that would reproduce significant data that the users themselves generate; this would allow AI to select content that the user is likely to want to consume (Mota, 2023). Returning to the advantages of social media, one could indicate that they provide a horizontal, decentralized space that increases social connectedness and opportunities for political interaction. But from another perspective, there could be a consequence of decontextualization or questions about the quality and intent of the content. In this way, the algorithms used by these platforms track our habits, preferences, opinions and behaviors to shape our reality; that is, they show us the world we want to see. As Innerarity and Colomina (2020) indicate, social media, through the use of algorithms, uses our profiles to influence the analysis that each person makes of reality. In relation to the foregoing, one could argue that the algorithms represent the population according to the profile generated from data collected on these platforms, thereby affecting the user's decision-making and potentially impacting their freedom and autonomy (Valle-Jiménez and Pinilla-Escobar, 2023). The present study was conducted in two stages: a qualitative stage, whose objectives are to identify the relationship of young citizens with the use of social media in political matters and to determine whether AI used by different platforms affects their

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political decisions. From this first stage, a research hypothesis emerges that serves as the starting point for the second stage, which is quantitative in nature and aims to determine whether the bias that could be generated on social media by the use of AI would impact the influence that these platforms have on young citizens. The article is divided into the following sections: a theoretical framework, where the literature that supports the article is referenced; a methodology that provides an approach to reality from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives; a results analysis that allows the achievement of the objectives, answers the research questions and tests or refutes the study's hypothesis, which underpins the final section of the article, the discussion and conclusions; in the discussion, the results are interpreted in relation to the research questions and hypotheses in light of the existing literature, and in the conclusion, the main findings and contributions of the study are synthesized.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Political Communication and Social Media

Political communication represents "the set of messages circulating within a political system that condition its entire activity, from the formation of demands to the processes of the system's own transformation" (Bobbio, Matteucci, and Pasquino, 2015). At the same time, it symbolizes the link that enables the information process with its respective repercussions, meanings and possibilities, which is indispensable for the functioning of any political system (Reyes, 2007). This communication process is dynamic and seeks to have repercussions at both the individual and social levels; in other words, every act of communication intends to persuade the receiver (Berlo, 2000). Regarding political communication, the Internet and social media have generated new spaces that not only have fostered the consumption of political information but have also allowed interaction; this in turn, has impacted the behavior and the various attitudes that users exhibit toward politics (Peschard, 2000; Street, 2005; Newton, 2006).

In the same vein, Moya and Herrera (2015a, 2015b) point out that the Internet, as an interactive medium, has generated changes in citizenship; they indicate that citizens who previously formed judgments based on what is presented by traditional media now have access to a plurality of sources.

Regarding digital media in particular, the Internet and social media, which originate from the evolutionary process of information and communication technologies (ICT), represent, within the field of communication, the emergence of a new paradigm that has generated horizontal communication in which the information recipient at any given moment can become an emitter, and information interactions can occur directly, in contrast to traditional media (print press, radio, and television); in other words, we would be facing an interactive model (Moya and Herrera 2015b; García and Maurer, 2009). As Borge, Cardenal, and Malpica (2012) indicate, the Internet and social media give their users the opportunity to interact regardless of geographical distances, being an efficient means of communication relative to time investment, enabling the development of an intense communication environment. Likewise, the Internet accelerates the speed with which information is transmitted and stored, and the ease of access to this medium gives rise to a greater number of interactions and citizen engagement in public life (Delli-Carpini, 2000). Social

media, as collective platforms, give each user the same communicative potential; social media users have equal opportunities to receive and exchange information (Amado and Turullo, 2015). In turn, the Internet and social media provide us with greater access to an innumerable amount of information, granting citizens a large number of possibilities to delve into a particular topic (Kenski and Stroud, 2006).

In what has been discussed, we can identify some of the advantages that the Internet and social media present for political communication; however, we cannot overlook some potential negative effects. For example, the low cost of creating automated accounts and the ability to publish on anonymous or impersonally operated accounts enable manipulation of online content presented to real users, which leads to persuasion (Zhuravskaya, Petrova, and Enikolopov, 2020). Another negative situation generated by the Internet and social media is the spread of misinformation through distorted information, with the dissemination of fake news misleading recipients; likewise, it could be argued that the risk posed by fake news does not lie in where they are reproduced, but in how they influence the conventional media agenda and impact public debate and opinion trends (Pérez, 2019). Additionally, Battista and Petrone (2024) note that, while earlier technologies could already modify language and persuasion, AI adds an extra feature: manipulation in both political and communicative processes, making it harder to distinguish between fake news and manipulated content. They also emphasize the need to understand this new perspective through a paradigm shift.

On the other hand, we have moved from fake news to deep fakes, which, in the same vein, are false communications, but with the difference that they appear so realistic that it is virtually impossible to distinguish them from true content. Likewise, bots (automatically generated accounts) are a means by which users can receive false news if used in a malicious way, based on the premise that users have greater trust in content from other users than in traditional media, meaning that these accounts can pass as genuine users (Mota, 2023). On social media, at any given moment contextualization can be de-emphasized and trivialization can be privileged, generating doubts about the quality and intent of their content; furthermore, based on their algorithms, platforms appropriate personal data to use them for economic and political purposes, influencing the analysis of our approach to reality (Innerarity and Colomina, 2020). Considering what has been mentioned, one could summarize some of the advantages and limitations that social media may represent for democracy. In a first instance, these platforms represent a horizontal and decentralized space that increases political debate and social engagement, eliminates geographic distances, speeds up the transmission of information, provides access to a greater number of information sources, and offers opportunities for citizen interactions and involvement in public life. From a less favorable perspective, contextualization may be privileged and, based on their algorithms, personal data may be misappropriated; content manipulation through automated, anonymous or impersonated accounts; distortion of information through the publication of fake news or deep fakes, which are nearly indistinguishable from real news. Additionally, bots aid in the spread of such news; they can also create a sense among users of being informed without actually being so, leading to subjective knowledge rather than factual knowledge.

Artificial Intelligence, Social media and Politics

In general, one could indicate that artificial intelligence can be defined as the use of computational machinery to represent and carry out human tasks that include physical activities, thinking and the expression of emotions. From this perspective, with multiple approaches to AI, different tasks presenting mechanical, cognitive and emotional intelligence could be performed (Huang and Rust, 2018; Huang *et al.*, 2019). Taking as reference the study by Sarrión-Andaluz and Rodríguez-Gordo (2021), it can be indicated that the relationship between AI and social media is manifested through a set of machine learning algorithms that predict users' behavior and preferences. These algorithms analyze the information collected from interactions on social media to determine which posts are shown to each user, based on their prior activity. This evaluative process not only enables content personalization for users but also contributes to ongoing analysis of user behavior, which in turn optimizes the effectiveness of post selection. In this way, AI and social media interact to create a more tailored and relevant user experience, influencing their decisions and improving engagement on the platforms. Furthermore, Rodilosso (2024) notes that in social media, the personalization presented through algorithms could generate monotonous and ineffective experiences for users, potentially hindering learning. This could reinforce convictions and thus bias deliberative capacity by limiting exposure to different perspectives, thereby reinforcing biases. In her proposal, the author highlights the need to ethically design algorithms, which could transform these control tools into democratic instruments.

In particular, the study by Kulshrestha *et al.* (2017), which focused on bias generated on social media specifically on Twitter (X), demonstrated that both the input data (tweets) and the platform's classification algorithm have a considerable impact on the emergence of a relevant bias in search results. This bias is influenced by different aspects, such as the topic of the query and how it is framed. Similarly, the work by Kubin and Von Sikorski (2021) examining different studies on the role of social media in political polarization identified that in various contexts they can exacerbate both ideological and affective political polarization. On the other hand, in the electoral realm, AI has proven to be especially valuable, since, by analyzing information about potential voters, it is possible to detect their concerns and needs. This facilitates audience segmentation and the creation of content specific to each group, influencing voters' decisions by generating messages that align with the expectations of specific population segments, matching the values of candidates to effectively meet those needs (Mota, 2023).

In relation to the above, Abeliuk (2023) indicates that social media such as Twitter (X), Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn can create a personalized social feed through the selection algorithms they use; in this sense, they utilize the content generated by the people that users follow; that is, this social feed presents itself as an algorithmic mechanism that focuses on the specific content of a group of particular people whom a user follows regularly. On the other hand, two indispensable concepts that must be analyzed regarding online information are the echo chamber and the filter bubble. The echo chamber refers to users' tendency to receive information that reinforces their own beliefs, and the filter bubble can be related to the algorithms that personalize content based on users' browsing

history, location and interests on platforms like Google and social media. This personalization can lead to users isolating themselves in ideological environments, reducing exposure to diverse viewpoints and, consequently, affecting the quality of political dialogue and public knowledge. By remaining in these bubbles, users may lose trust in shared facts (Mishra, 2022). Furthermore, Chen *et al.* (2021) note that even if the platform does not show partisan biases, the social media and activities users undertake on them would generate a context in which these platforms would end up in echo chambers. In contrast, the findings presented by Dutton *et al.* (2017) challenge technologically deterministic views about information seeking, such as filter bubbles and echo chambers, by showing that politically interested users are not limited to a single platform but use diverse tools to seek and verify information from multiple perspectives. This suggests that dominant narratives about searching and politics tend to overstate technological factors and underestimate the impact of social context, including cultures and media systems, as well as individual differences. Moreover, there is considerable concern about bias in searches and social media, which indicates that targeted interventions could be effective in mitigating risks related to misinformation and filtering dynamics. In the same vein, Bakshy *et al.* (2015) conclude that individual choices have a greater impact than algorithms in limiting exposure to ideologically diverse content on Facebook. The study also suggests that users are exposed to more content that crosses ideological lines than previously thought.

Furthermore, Strauß, Alonso Muñoz, and Gil de Zúñiga (2020) state that regular discussion of political issues acts as a key factor explaining how citizens who show greater interest and active participation in online politics, as well as those who consume news through digital and traditional media, could break the filter bubble that exists on social media. This suggests that these individuals might seek to participate in more heterogeneous discussion media, expanding their exposure to diverse perspectives and opinions. However, in their study, they indicate that mediation analyses have shown that this same frequency of discussion can, in some cases, lead to the formation of media. This phenomenon could lead to the establishment of closed media, composed of individuals with deep political knowledge. Separately, Terren and Borge (2021), after reviewing 55 studies aimed at identifying the existence of echo chambers on social media, indicated that the hypothesis asserting that echo chambers exist on social media has strong support; but they also note that the impact of social media on democratic deliberation cannot be reduced in a dichotomous manner since it is complex, *i.e.*, one should not simply state existence or non-existence. In this sense, the use of social media can sometimes contribute positively to democratic deliberation and pluralism, and at other times hinder it. Regarding the relationship between social media and politics, there are several studies, such as the one by Buccoliero *et al.* (2020), which analyzed the Twitter platform (X) and its presence in the 2016 United States presidential elections; they emphasize the impact of this social media on elections, where it is indicated that the impact of social media displaced traditional media in public opinion. Both candidates used this platform with different objectives, such as expressing their positions via tweets, responding to opponents, encouraging the population to vote and keeping them updated with news, among others. For the 2016 presidential candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, Twitter (X) was one of the most important media for their campaigns; users on this social

Regarding the analysis category that is social media, it can be reported that the youth participants in the different focus groups consider that among the advantages of social media as a means of communication, would be the easy access and the opportunity to interact with other users. They also indicate that they use social media from a political perspective to inform themselves, disseminate information, monitor political information and interact. Additionally, they note some disadvantages of using social media for political matters, such as the sheer volume of information that can be found and the possibility that not all of it is truthful. They also point to the potential for AI-driven bias on social media, which displays content based on users' past searches and preferences and thus limits exposure to other types of political material.

Moreover, they view social media as a communication model that enables the diffusion of information and interaction among its users. For youth, these platforms are a very important means of political communication because they allow them to inform themselves and to interact. An example is Twitter (X) as a platform that serves as a medium for expressing political opinions or discussing politics in general; Facebook, by using AI through algorithms, presents information according to users' political preferences, thereby biasing the information received. Overall, they see social media as a tool that can be used to inform themselves and participate in politics.

Regarding some of the explicit expressions from the participants in the different focus groups that underpin the above, the following are reported:

FG1: "...they have a cellphone at least... they have... social media..."

FG1: "...for young people, social media are indeed important..."

FG2: "...social media are what impact us..."

FG1: "...through social media is where young people get information..."

FG1: "...social media are a means of diffusion and interaction..."

FG1: "...Twitter... is one of the applications most used to express your opinion and, in general, about politics..."

FG3: "...on social media I follow news pages and try to communicate with those I know..."

FG1: "...as young people, for the most part we are all very connected to social media and to the whole trend..."

FG1: "...Facebook depends on the algorithm that appears to you; that will depend a lot on the influence of the media, propaganda..."

FG4: "...they are a great tool to delve into politics..."

FG1: "...the way I participate is through social media..."

FG3: "...then social media have their benefits but also their drawbacks, because there is a lot of information... they don't know... if the information is correct..."

FG4: "...social media will always be a double-edged sword; people search for what concerns them or what they want..."

FG4: "...the negative is that many times you can misinform yourself and have an incorrect idea..."

The statements made by the youth across the different focus groups highlight the relevance and, at the same time, the duality of social media in young people's lives. In this sense, it is evident that social media represent an essential tool for communication, interaction, and the diffusion of information, given that most participants have access to at least one mobile

phone and use platforms such as Twitter (X) and Facebook, not only to stay informed but also to express their opinions and participate in political debates. On the other hand, they recognize that the use of social media can promote misinformation and fake news, which could distort their perception of reality. They also consider that the influence of algorithms and propaganda on these platforms plays a relevant role in the information they consume as users, potentially limiting their perspective and fostering echo chambers rather than constructive dialogue. This suggests that, when exposed to an avalanche of propaganda and algorithm-filtered data, young people can fall into the trap of misinformation, where personalization becomes a double-edged sword; in this sense, exposure to certain political messages may be biased, limiting the diversity of opinions.

Focusing on what could be the negative aspect of using social media, the following research hypothesis was generated:

RH1. The use of AI on social media creates a bias in the information that users receive, impacting the political influence that these platforms have on them. Regarding the second phase of the investigation, which corresponds to the quantitative study, we first proceeded to create the research variables. For the creation of the political bias in social media (AI) variable, a 5-point Likert scale where (1) is none and (5) is quite a lot was used; young respondents were asked how much they agreed with statements such as: on social media I follow people or accounts that share my opinion, social media present information that aligns with my preferences, they influence my political opinion and interactions on them polarize more than in real life. Internal consistency was positive, with a Cronbach's alpha (α) of .831.

The variable for the influence of Facebook on political matters was constructed using a Likert scale ranging from (1) none to (5) quite a lot; participants were asked how much they agreed with the following statements: on Facebook the advertising presented increases my interest in political topics, the information presented influences my decision on whom to vote for and for which candidate to vote and it also aligns with my political preferences. Regarding reliability, Cronbach's alpha (α) was .885. For the creation of the variable influence of X in political matters, a 5-point Likert scale where (1) is none and (5) is quite a lot was used; respondents were asked how much they agreed with the following statements: on X the advertising presented increases my interest in political topics, the information presented influences my decision on whom to vote for and reflects my political preferences. The reliability scale showed a Cronbach's alpha (α) of .879. The variable for the influence of YouTube on political matters was created using a 5-point Likert scale from (1) none to (5) quite a lot; the aim was to determine how much young people agreed with the following statements: on YouTube the advertising presented increases my interest in politics, the information presented influences my decision on whom to vote for and aligns with my political preferences. Regarding reliability, Cronbach's alpha (α) was .890. In creating the variable for TikTok's influence on political matters, a 5-point Likert scale where (1) is none and (5) is quite a lot was used; the aim was to identify how much the surveyed individuals agreed with the following statements: on TikTok the advertising presented increases my interest in politics and reflects my political preferences. Cronbach's alpha (α) was .835, which confirms its internal consistency.

The variable for Instagram’s influence on political matters was created using a 5-point Likert scale from (1) none to (5) quite a lot; participants were asked how much they agreed with the following statements: on Instagram the advertising presented increases my interest in political topics, and the information presented aligns with my political preferences. Regarding reliability, Cronbach’s alpha (α) was .892.

Table 1. Reliability analysis of the variables

Variables	Cronbach’s alpha (α)
Bias in social media	.831
Influence of Facebook on political matters	.885
Influence of X on political matters	.890
Influence of YouTube on political matters	.890
Influence of TikTok on political matters	.835
Influence of Instagram on political matters	.892

Source: Own production

To determine the explanatory level of the independent variable bias in social media (AI) on the dependent variables, a simple linear regression was conducted. The model was run with the dependent variable being Facebook’s influence on political matters and the independent variable being bias in social media (AI), explaining 29.2% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.292$). The independent variable satisfies the independence assumption relative to the dependent variable, since the Durbin–Watson test value is $D = 2.09$, which is favorable as it falls within the allowed parameters. The AI variable (bias in social media) has a standardized coefficient (β) of .540 and a p-value $P < .001$, indicating an explanatory level for Facebook’s influence on political matters. Consequently, higher political bias generated by AI in social media generally positively impacts the influence Facebook can have on young users. For the third model, the dependent variable was the influence of YouTube on political matters and the independent variable was bias in social media (AI). This model explained 24.9% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.249$). The independent variable meets the independence assumption relative to the dependent variable, as indicated by the Durbin–Watson test value $D = 1.78$. The AI variable (bias in social media) with a standardized coefficient $\beta = .499$ and $P < .001$ showed explanatory power for the influence of YouTube on political matters; therefore, one could indicate that greater political bias generated by AI in social media generally increases the influence that YouTube can have on young users.

In the fourth model, the dependent variable was the influence of TikTok on political matters and the independent variable was bias in social media (AI). This model explained 20.7% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.207$). The independent variable meets the independence assumption relative to the dependent variable, as indicated by the Durbin–Watson test value $D = 1.87$. The AI variable (bias in social media) with a standardized coefficient $\beta = .455$ and $P < 0.001$ showed explanatory power for the influence of TikTok on political matters; consequently, one could note that greater political bias generated by AI in social media generally positively impacts the influence that TikTok can have on young users of the platform. In the fifth model, the dependent variable was the influence of Instagram on political matters and the independent variable was bias in social media (AI). This model explained 21.6% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.216$). The independent variable meets the independence assumption relative to the dependent variable, since the Durbin–Watson test value is $D = 1.97$, which is favorable as it falls within the allowable parameters. The AI variable (bias in social media)

with a standardized coefficient $\beta = .464$ and $P < 0.001$ showed explanatory power for the influence of Instagram on political matters; consequently, one could indicate that greater political bias generated by AI in social media generally increases the influence that Instagram can have on young users of this platform.

Table 2. Explanatory power of the independent variables on the dependent variable

Variables	Model 1 Influence of Facebook on political matters	Model 2 Influence of X on political matters	Model 3 Influence of YouTube on political matters	Model 4 Influence of TikTok on political matters	Model 5 Influence of Instagram on political matters
Bias in social media (AI)	.540***	.510***	.499***	.455***	.464***
R^2	.292	.260	.249	.207	.216
Durbin Watson	2.09	1.86	1.78	1.87	1.97

Source: Own production

Discussion

In response to the first research question, it was observed that participants across the different focus groups assigned a prominent role to the use of social media as a means of communication, highlighting their easy accessibility and their ability to overcome geographic barriers. Additionally, according to the study results, it could be indicated that young people are actors who use this digital medium for information, dissemination, expression and interaction in political matters. In relation to these points, the position of Cárdenas, Ballesteros and Jara (2017) [42] is revisited, where it is noted that the use of social media mainly plays an argumentative role for users, serving as a space in which they can expose their position or support for political groups. The authors suggest that platforms could represent a tool of discursive character rather than a campaign strategy, which in the case of Mexico is primarily oriented toward disqualifying political opponents. On the contrary, in addition to the advantages identified by participants, they also mentioned several disadvantages that the use of these platforms could impact in the political sphere, such as the substantial volume of information they host, with no filtering indicating veracity, and the bias that could be generated within them since users consume material aligned with particular interests, limiting access to other types of political material. These results are consistent with Chen (2024) [43], who notes that social media in politics have generated greater communication and participation, i.e., they have allowed citizens greater access to information and interaction in political matters. On the other hand, he troublingly notes that it has also led to the fragmentation of public opinion and the proliferation of misinformation, which has resulted in the deterioration of the integrity of political discourse and trust in institutions. Given this, the author proposes fostering transparency, accountability and responsibility as elements that allow the potential of social media to be exploited from a democratic perspective. Regarding the second research question, it can be stated, based on the study results, that the impact of AI used by different social media platforms on the political decisions of young people, through algorithms, would generate a bias in the information they receive, which could, in some way, influence users’ decisions. In this line of reasoning, it can be noted that

since this type of technology can predict an individual's behavior through various algorithms, it could also amplify their political preferences to the extent that many platforms (X/Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) present information according to users' search patterns. In relation to this, Kim (2017) [44] mentions that algorithms, through an analysis of the unstructured data accumulated about the user, would predict content consumption that is of interest to them. AI would limit the opportunity for a person to receive diverse information that could influence their political inclinations; in other words, there would be a bias in the information the user receives.

Regarding the research hypothesis which states that the use of AI on social media generates a bias in the information that its users receive, impacting the political influence these platforms have on them, it can be noted that this is confirmed for the platforms included in the study—Facebook, X (Twitter), YouTube, TikTok and Instagram. In this regard, it can be said that the bias in social media, represented by statements indicating that users follow on social media people or accounts that share their opinion, that they consider present information aligned with their preferences, that are factors influencing their political opinion and that interactions on these platforms polarize more than in real life, does impact the influence that social media could have on citizenship. It can be commented that the algorithms that generate the bias in social media would be reaffirming young people's political views without giving them the opportunity to review or consider other viewpoints, thereby not only influencing young people's opinions but also their political decision-making. In relation to the above, we would be facing two intertwined phenomena: an echo chamber, referring to the tendency of users to consume information that confirms their own stance, and a filter bubble, which allows algorithms to personalize the content accessible to the user according to their browsing history (Mishra, 2022) [28]. An example of what has been described is found on social media like Facebook, where a marketing technique known as Segmentation-Targeting-Positioning (STP) is used; the marketing team segments a population into diverse groups based on various characteristics. Facebook has developed tools such as "Facebook for Politics" (FfP), which is contracted by a campaign client (CC) during an electoral cycle to positively influence users toward the electoral perspective desired by the CC (Kane, 2019) [45].

Conclusion

It can be concluded that young people rate the use of social media from an ambivalent perspective, since they consider them essential tools for informing themselves, disseminating, expressing themselves and interacting on political matters. In other words, social media has transformed how they obtain information and engage, generating spaces for participation and interaction in politics. At the same time, they view the bias generated by the algorithms used on these platforms as personalizing access to political information (filter bubble), limiting access to other opinions that differ from their own viewpoint (echo chamber), thereby reaffirming their own stance and, in effect, narrowing their political vision. Regarding the results, it can also be indicated that, in general, social media exhibits a significant bias in relation to the information they present when using AI and this bias would impact the influence that each of these platforms would have on young people's political perceptions. In the current context

of political communication, social media and AI represent a paradigm that, in particular, requires young people to have the capacity to discern between useful, objective and truthful information versus information that could be manipulated. In this sense, there is a need for young people with critical thinking and the ability to identify reliable sources, unreliable sources and informational biases that could be disseminated across different social media with the involvement of AI.

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