

Las redes sociales digitales como factor de proximidad entre la sociedad y los gobiernos subnacionales en México

*Digital Social Networks as a Factor of Proximity Between Society and
Subnational Governments in Mexico*

*Redes sociais digitais como fator de proximidade entre a sociedade e os
governos subnacionais no México*

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Resumen

El uso de redes sociales digitales por parte de los gobiernos ha crecido en años recientes y, además, se ha convertido, por una parte, en una oportunidad para acercarse a la ciudadanía, pero, por otra, en un gran reto: ¿Qué redes sociales utilizar y para qué?

El objetivo central de este trabajo fue conocer cuáles son las redes sociales más utilizadas por los gobiernos subnacionales en México y examinar la forma en que se usan, así como sus posibles limitaciones. Para lograrlo, se realizó un estudio exploratorio de las páginas web de cada uno de los gobiernos subnacionales para comprobar si en dicho portal se contemplaba a las redes sociales como una forma de poner en contacto a los ciudadanos con su gobierno. Una vez identificadas las redes sociales más utilizadas, se realizó un seguimiento de las publicaciones en Facebook (por ser la más utilizada) durante tres meses de los 32 gobiernos a fin de determinar cómo se usa esta red social.

Las redes sociales más utilizadas fueron: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube e Instagram. Solo un gobierno subnacional no utiliza actualmente ninguna de estas redes. Sin embargo, a pesar del potencial de estas herramientas, aún no constituyen un mecanismo de vinculación real entre

gobierno y ciudadanos. Finalmente, se plantea una propuesta de estrategia para mejorar el uso de las redes sociales por parte de los gobiernos subnacionales.

Palabras clave: gobierno abierto, gobierno electrónico, redes sociales, TIC, web 2.0.

Abstract

The use of digital social networks by governments has grown in recent years and has also become, on one hand, an opportunity to approach citizenship but, on the other, a great challenge: What social networks to use and why?

The main objective of this work was to find out which are the most used social networks by the subnational governments in Mexico and to examine the way in which they are used, as well as their possible limitations. To achieve this, an exploratory study of the websites of each of the subnational governments was carried out to check whether social networks were viewed in the portal as a means of bringing citizens into contact with their government. Once identified the most used social networks, the publications on Facebook for three months of the 32 governments were tracked to determine how this social network is used.

The most used social networks were: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. Only a subnational government does not currently use any of these networks. However, despite the potential of these tools, they do not yet constitute a mechanism of real link between government and citizens. Finally, a strategy is proposed to improve the use of social networks by subnational governments.

Keywords: open government, e-government, social media, ICT, web 2.0.

Resumo

O uso das redes sociais digitais pelos governos tem crescido nos últimos anos e, além disso, se tornou, por um lado, uma oportunidade para se aproximar dos cidadãos, mas, por outro lado, um grande desafio: quais redes Use social e para quê?

O objetivo principal deste trabalho foi saber quais redes sociais são mais utilizadas pelos governos subnacionais no México e examinar a forma como são utilizados, bem como suas possíveis limitações. Para conseguir isso, foi realizado um estudo exploratório das páginas da Web de cada um dos governos subnacionais para verificar se as redes sociais foram contempladas no portal como forma de colocar os cidadãos em contato com seu governo. Uma vez que as redes sociais mais utilizadas foram identificadas, as publicações no Facebook (sendo as mais usadas) foram monitoradas durante três meses dos 32 governos para determinar como essa rede social é usada.

As redes sociais mais utilizadas foram: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube e Instagram. Apenas um governo subnacional atualmente não usa nenhuma dessas redes. No entanto, apesar do potencial dessas ferramentas, eles ainda não constituem um mecanismo de vínculo real entre o governo e os cidadãos. Finalmente, propõe-se uma proposta de estratégia para melhorar o uso das redes sociais pelos governos subnacionais.

Palavras-chave: governo aberto, governo eletrônico, redes sociais, TIC, web 2.0.

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Introduction

In recent years, the use of technological tools such as social networks has become common and these have made it possible to immediately contact a considerable number of people, who meet again on the Internet, where they exchange information or express their feelings regarding some event.

Currently, from the use of the Internet and web 2.0, social networks have become a space in which the exchange of information can be done continuously through messaging, blogs, chat, among other options; Likewise, the groups of people that make up a network can share interests, opinions, generate support and help, integrate thematically, generate a sense of belonging or socialize.

Based on technological innovation, governments modernize and have before them the opportunity to bond more closely with citizens. This evolutionary change has much to do with technological innovation, but also with new ways of governing such as the so-called open government, which apparently aims to leave behind a model in which citizens participated in decision-making only through their representatives .

Social networks today have become a space with many opportunities for any field of productive activity, and can be a fundamental instrument to build new relationships of closeness and social participation in government activities.

In this context, it is considered important to study subnational governments in Mexico as an intermediate level of government that must be close to citizens, but at the same time its complexity can be a limitation. Thus, technological tools allow these governments to be more visible in a virtual space that also enables them to be more transparent and, above all, close.

Therefore, this work aims to know what are the most used social networks by subnational governments in Mexico, as well as to examine the way in which they are used and identify their possible limitations. It is assumed that subnational governments use social networks because of their tendency to increase their use, without this implying a relationship of proximity between government and citizens.

Initially, the topic of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) linked to government activity is conceptually addressed, to later identify what social networks are and what are the most common types of networks, as well as their emergence and development.

Likewise, a section on government and social networks is developed, based on the authors who have approached the topic, the strategies that governments can follow for the use of social networks. Subsequently, the data obtained on the use of social networks by subnational

governments is presented, as a result of the monitoring carried out, and finally, a proposal is proposed to improve the use of social networks by subnational governments in Mexico.

Methodology

It is an exploratory study of qualitative character, in which it is tried to know if at the moment the subnational governments in Mexico have been involved in the use of the most common social networks, for it a document review was made in the first instance to pose a conceptual framework, as well as to know more in depth what are the social networks and their typologies.

Subsequently, an exploration of the web pages of each of the subnational governments was carried out to check whether social networks were contemplated in these portals as a way of putting citizens in contact with their government. Once the most used social networks were identified, the publications on Facebook were monitored for three months (from April to June of this year) of the 32 governments using three variables: information (the government provides information), interaction and participation, In order to determine how this social network is used in an approximate vision, characteristic of an exploratory study that in turn allows to identify the tendency that the governments follow and that can serve as an input for a deeper investigation.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in government activity

In recent years, great changes have taken place based on technological advances, forms of communication have been transformed, as well as the way in which individuals interact.

Many of the changes and exercises of modernization of governments and public administrations are linked to the use of technology, for example: government websites, which have information considered useful for citizens, but mainly is information that it has to do with the different administrative dependencies (directory, functions, organization chart), procedures and actions carried out.

The linking of ICT to government activities has been increasing every time, promoting the so-called electronic government whose adoption has modified the management processes with the intention of improving in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

E-government has become a key component of any state modernization process insofar as it improves the quality of information for decision-making, speeds up the time to process and deliver goods and services, reduces the administrative burdens imposed on society, strengthens the State's oversight capabilities, facilitates accountability and encourages transparency and citizen participation (Poggi, 2013).

The electronic government presents, based on Contreras (2014), two dimensions: the internal one, whose scope refers to internal management (operations and information that flows between administrative units) and the external dimension, whose scope is the provision of services, the offer of information and democratic participation.

The external dimension is what allows the link with society, from the use of ICT, society is a more informed society and, therefore, more demanding. This represents the possibility of a communicational change that governments must take into account to redefine how to approach citizens.

ICTs constitute a particular set of media and, as such, depend on their integration and coherence of the objectives pursued (Pando, 2010), that is, they are only an instrument that governments can use for various purposes.

Concept and types of social networks

In recent years, talking about social networks has become commonplace, however, it is necessary to specify that the digital social network is understood as "a space in which individuals interact with others through the use of the Internet, which is based on software that allows the exchange of information through messages, blogs, chats, among other options; Likewise, the groups of people that make up a network can share interests, opinions, generate support and help, be integrated thematically, generate a sense of belonging or socialize" (Gómez, Contreras and Gutiérrez, 2016).

There are several social networks, among the most known or most used currently are: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Whatsapp, Google+ and LinkedIn, among others. However, it is necessary to identify that they obey different purposes. For example, those that prioritize the establishment of social relationships (Facebook), those that communicate or disseminate information (YouTube) or networks that establish professional relationships (LinkedIn).

Based on a study on the use of social networks in Spain, carried out by Caldevilla (2010), it identifies that there are those whose use privileges socialization and some others whose use can be more specialized or that obey particular interests; Therefore, it proposes five types of social networks:

- General, which are identified with Facebook and Twitter.
- Fans, in which the users share common interests such as sports, gastronomy, travel, etc.
- Vital states, which are specific groups of people such as young people, parents, grandparents.
- Contents, which are networks in which videos or photographs are shared.
- Professionals and activists.

Although this proposal is not unique, it is useful for this work because it allows us to see that, according to the objectives pursued, the use and usefulness of the networks are different.

The most well-known social networks over the past few years have been: My Space in 2002, Hi5 in 2003, Facebook since 2004 as well as LinkedIn, YouTube in 2005 and Twitter in 2006, among others (Flores, 2009).

Among the advantages that can be recognized in the use of these networks is that they allow the socialization or the creation of specific groups, that share interests or related tastes through virtual instruments, they have the facility to use the structure and platform of the network, without the need to create something new.

Through these tools, communication can be established in real time, which has generated recently that various movements of solidarity that champion a cause are organized, which allows creating spaces for initiatives that emerge from society. However, it is also necessary to point out possible disadvantages of its use, for example, the creation of false profiles that may have other interests than those indicated above and the risk that personal data will be handled without due precaution.

The government and social networks

Governments and specifically public administrations have not been isolated from social networks and their use; On the contrary, it is increasingly common for governments to make their presence felt through the most well-known networks. From the point of view of Criado (2013), social networks have been incorporated into the public sphere through informal experimentation and broad and widespread dissemination, although not necessarily under a strategy built to generate greater closeness to society.

As has been pointed out, social networks are not the same, their behavior is different, but they have in common to easily allow communication between people. Through these networks, society is present in a virtual environment that represents both benefits of communication and connection between individuals and privacy problems and lack of confidence in the information disseminated there. (Díaz, 2011).

For governments, the use of social networks can have advantages such as: being present permanently among citizens through timely and constant information on the actions taken; maintain communication in real time with citizens; know the public opinion about actions; programs or events that would allow governments to have a pulse closer to the general interest and act accordingly.

Among the risks involved in the use of social networks by governments, is that comments that are unfavorable to its management can be eliminated, that is, governments can be selective with this information and reduce the credibility of publications; the false profiles created by citizens with a purpose other than interaction with their government or the so-

called bots (a term derived from Robot) and which are a simulation of users that are used to print trends such as generating more "likes", criticism or counteract negative opinions, although they can be detected are not regulated.

However, despite some drawbacks, the use of technology, specifically social networks can be a very important tool for governance, which implies new relationships between government and society. For García (2013), social networks move the government to the street. However, in this technological age, it is not only about using social networks to look modern, innovative, but there must be a clear objective.

Currently, social networks are an instrument that allows establishing virtual relations of proximity, an example of which are political campaigns that through the use of certain platforms a candidate can generate a greater number of followers or influence the opinion of those who are undecided. A case of successful political campaign among other things for the management of social networks was that of Barack Obama in the presidential elections of 2008 in the United States.

In the case of governments and public administrations, closeness to society is essential, in situations of emergency or public safety, the speed with which information flows through social networks is an important factor in making timely decisions.

Despite recognizing advantages and certain disadvantages, a fact is indisputable, social networks have transformed the way in which individuals relate and have a great potential for disseminating information, this has permeated the government and opens the door to actions innovative. However, what should governments consider in this era of the use of digital social networks? Criado and Rojas (2013) point out:

Social networks in public administrations involve three aspects: (a) citizens who are potential active agents in the production of web content (or prosumers); (b) the extension of the idea of collaborative intelligence, that is, the evidence that public innovation is also outside the formal limits of the organization; (c) as well as the growing disintermediation of activities between organizations and individuals. In short, all of the above reflects a new scenario for collaboration, transparency, participation and accountability within the public sphere.

It is essential to establish clearly which networks are going to be used and for what, since the interaction through them has not only increased considerably among individuals, but a different perception of time and space has been created, giving rise to a sensation of immediacy of the events and an acceleration in the processes (Cornejo and Tapia, 2011).

Therefore, it is important that the messages that governments wish to make known to society through networks address elements such as: information (what kind of information is included), discourse (must be clear), choosing recipients, develop the ideal tools (ease of access and reproduction), visibility (Caldevilla, 2009).

From the perspective of Mergel (2013), social networks in governments can be used from three strategies:

1. Use of networks to represent the agency.
2. Use to generate commitment from citizens.
3. Networking with society.

In the first case, the use of social networks represents a way in which government agencies are present in society through the most known or most used networks; they are tools that allow governments to use platforms without cost, but this alternative is no more than an extension of web portals (Criado and Rojas, 2013). That is, information is only provided in a unidirectional way, Mergel (2013) calls it a push strategy.

In the second case, generating commitment from citizens requires interaction. Networks such as Facebook and Twitter can be spaces to achieve this, as long as there is the possibility to generate comments and have the certainty of the answer, otherwise it is only about the push strategy.

Facebook has a wide range of options to configure the profile, so under this strategy it is essential that citizens have the opportunity to generate comments and that these can be replicated. In the case of Twitter, under the condition that the account is public, the messages (tweets) of a user can be disseminated by another user (s) to what is known as a retweet. In any case, there is the possibility of replication.

This strategy Mergel (2013) called pull, because it allows a rapprochement with citizens with the intention of generating a commitment; However, the author also points out that these experiences are still scarce in the public sector, although there are examples considered as best practices in organizations of the private sector.

The third strategy, also called networking, involves interacting, socializing, sharing and co-producing activities with citizens. This can result in the creation of new public services or even more, the extension of electronic public services through social technologies (Criado and Rojas, 2013).

The utility of social networks for governments is wide. The so-called Open Government (GA) for just over five years has represented a "new" way of governing using technological advance, promoting the idea of a greater approach to society through three elements: transparency, participation and collaboration.

A GA is a government that generates trust, that can give better results, higher levels of compliance, greater equity of access to the formulation of public policies (OECD, 2010). In this panorama, social networks can be the instrument that allows governments to improve their capacities through the involvement of citizens in a deliberative and conversational process (Roa, 2013).

Acevedo (2017) points out that it is not about handing over public power on Twitter, but it highlights that social networks have begun, progressively, to distribute the public voice. Therefore, listening and taking into account what citizens think is a fundamental task to define public agendas.

The challenges facing governments in this digital age are not few; However, the use of social networks should not be seen as a fashion, but as an opportunity to design new horizons in the government-society relationship, where responsible use means greater benefits.

Governments should consider the use of social networks as strategic tools to serve citizens (Khan, 2017), under the knowledge of their advantages and disadvantages.

Mexico and social networks

In recent years, access to the Internet has increased considerably worldwide, according to ECLAC. In the last five years the advance of the Internet in Latin America and the Caribbean accelerated: 55% of its inhabitants used the network in 2015, 20 percentage points more than in 2010. The penetration of broadband connections also grew strongly, particularly in the mobile modality, which went from 7% to 58% of the population (ECLAC, 2016).

The possibility of mobile access marks a new trend: citizens are not only better informed, but can also be more active in the exchange of information. Acevedo (2017) points out that Latin America is the most active region in the world in social networks. According to Katz (2015), 78.4% of Internet users in the region participate in digital social networks, compared to a world average of 63.6%. For example, in 2016 Facebook was the second most visited website in the region, but as a social network it ranks first. In 2015, comScore¹ He reported that Latin Americans dedicate more time to social networks than to any other Internet activity.

The only social network of Latin American origin is Taringa, which is currently positioned among the 10 most important networks in the region. However, it only represents 19% of the number of Facebook visitors (Katz, 2015).

This suggests that, if there were greater communication between government and citizens through electronic means, specifically social networks, confidence in government actions could be greater. However, the challenge is very big for governments because it implies changes in behavior and changes in management.

In Mexico, Hi5 can be considered as the pioneering social network (Sandoval and Saucedo, 2010), later the Spanish version of Facebook generated that many users emigrated from the first and joined Facebook.

Currently, the trend in the use of digital social networks has been favored by mobile devices, which may represent an opportunity for governments if they are open to the possibility of a

¹ comScore es una compañía dedicada a la investigación de marketing en Internet, que proporciona datos de marketing, servicios y comportamiento sobre el uso de Internet.

close relationship with citizens, since the exchange of information is essential in a society that moves by and for information (Díaz, 2011).

The Coordinator of the National Digital Strategy (EDN)² He announced that it is estimated that in 2016 Mexico had 70 million Internet users, when in 2012 it had 40 million, which means a significant increase; The goal of the EDN is to reach 2018 with 80 million users. Also, for the year 2016, 113 million cell phones were calculated and, on average, people spent seven hours of their time surfing the Internet (Notimex, 2016).

Mexico reflects an important use of social networks worldwide; in 2014, a total of 98.2% of visitors to social network sites registered a total of 95.8% of the total number of Internet users, while the overall average was 87.1% (Marchant, 2014). In this year, the most popular network was Facebook.

During 2016, the Strategic Communication Cabinet (GCE), an organization that conducts public opinion studies, applied a survey in which it was shown that the most consulted social network was Facebook with 74.2% preference, followed very distantly by WhatsApp, Twitter and others (Rebolledo, 2016).

One aspect that explains the popular use of social networks is the increase in smart telephony and the use of mobile devices, which makes access to the internet and social networks available to a greater number of people.

During 2017, comScore based on the measurement made indicates that Facebook continues to be the most used social network among Mexican Internet users (Becerril, 2017), which suggests that it can be a tool (under a defined strategy) that governments can use to link in real time with citizens.

It is important to point out that the central objective of this work is to know what are the social networks used by subnational governments. An exploratory study seeks to identify if these governments have been involved in the use of networks, at least it is an indicator that shows if the issue represents any importance in this technological era.

² La Estrategia Nacional Digital (EDN) es el plan de acción que pretende construir un México Digital, en el que la tecnología y la innovación contribuyan a alcanzar las metas de desarrollo del país. Se crea en 2013, su coordinadora es Alejandra Lagunes.

A search and exploration of the websites of each subnational government was carried out to verify if they included any reference or link of any social network, the findings on the social networks used are presented in Table 1.

Subsequently, a simple follow-up of the most used network was made to observe how it is used, that is, if it only shares information, if the public can comment, if it is possible to share the publications or, if a strategy is followed that can be perceived.

Table 1. Redes sociales contempladas en las páginas web de los gobiernos por entidad federativa.

Entidad Federativa	 Facebook	 Twitter	 YouTube	 Instagram	 Otras
Aguascalientes	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Baja California	✓	✓	✓		Metatube
Baja California Sur	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Campeche					No contempla ninguna red
Ciudad de México	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Coahuila	✓	✓			Slideshare Pinterest
Colima	✓	✓	✓		blogspot
Chiapas	✓	✓	✓		Tumblr, RSS
Chihuahua	✓	✓	✓		
Durango	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Guanajuato	✓	✓	✓		
Guerrero	✓	✓	✓		
Hidalgo	✓	✓	✓		
Jalisco	✓	✓	✓		
México	✓	✓	✓		
Michoacán	✓	✓	✓		
Morelos	✓	✓	✓		
Nayarit	✓	✓			
Nuevo León	✓	✓	✓		
Oaxaca	✓	✓			
Puebla	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Querétaro	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Quintana Roo	✓	✓	✓	✓	
San Luis Potosí	✓	✓	✓		
Sinaloa	✓	✓			
Sonora	✓	✓	✓		
Tabasco	✓	✓	✓		
Tamaulipas	✓	✓	✓		
Tlaxcala	✓	✓		✓	
Veracruz	✓	✓	✓		
Yucatán	✓	✓			
Zacatecas	✓	✓	✓	✓	Snapchat
Total	31	31	25	9	5

Fuente: elaboración propia con base en las páginas web de las entidades federativas.

As indicated above, in Mexico one of the most used social networks is Facebook, based on the previous table we can see that of the 32 states that make up the country, 31 consider it on their website, in addition to Twitter. Which could mean that governments are cutting-edge, that they use this means to be present in society.

Additionally, 25 states add to the aforementioned networks to YouTube, the "content network" as Caldevilla calls it (2010), which allows the dissemination of information through videos, which are usually videos that publicize government actions. There are nine cases that make use of Instagram, another more recent network that was purchased by Facebook in 2012, and is an application to which the capacity of interaction through photography has been attributed as the main value. In addition, it allows you to share these snapshots in different social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest and Flickr. (Caerols, Tapia, Carretero, 2013). Other cases, the least, include some other network.

The case of Campeche is striking, which is the only case in which the state government does not show the inclusion of social networks as a communication tool with citizens, which may be due to the fact that it is not considered a priority.

Based on Table 1, it is considered that Facebook (FB) is one of the most used social networks, so a simple follow-up of this network was carried out during the months of April, May and June of 2017, in order to identify some elements that would allow to know how it is used.

The use of social networks by governments must involve a digital strategy; One of the factors to consider to know if the use of a technological tool such as a social network is successful are the metric indicators, for example: the size of the community or audience that is interested in the publications, the number of followers or the number of "likes" or "I like" (Villaveces, 2017).

Therefore, Table 2 shows the data of the number of followers, the number of "likes" obtained from each Facebook account of the subnational governments, it was also observed that in the total of cases there is interaction, that is, the Citizens can make comments and can get answers. The registered number of "I like" are to the page of FB and they are a necessary metric indicator to consider successful or not a page.

Table 2. Características del uso de Facebook en los gobiernos subnacionales.

Gobierno del Estado	No. de seguidores	Me gusta	FB
Aguascalientes	25,420	25,327	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoAguascalientes/
Baja California	42,734	43,056	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoBC/
Baja California Sur	54,217	54,230	https://www.facebook.com/GobEdoBCS/
Ciudad de México	289,744	291,790	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoCDMX/
Coahuila	33,477	33,479	https://www.facebook.com/gobiernocoahuila/
Colima	50,947	50,366	https://www.facebook.com/gobiernoocolima/
Chiapas	22,393	22,402	https://www.facebook.com/gobiernoodechiapas/
Chihuahua	228,513	229,804	https://www.facebook.com/gobiernoochihuahua/
Durango	108,509	108,175	https://www.facebook.com/gobdgo/
Guanajuato	157,993	159,050	https://www.facebook.com/gobiernooguanajuato/
Guerrero	229,364	232,482	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoGuerrero/
Hidalgo	44,619	44,731	https://www.facebook.com/gobhidalgo/
Jalisco	340,133	342,883	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoJalisco/
México	325,700	328,418	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoCDMX/

Michoacán	311,732	312,128	https://www.facebook.com/gobmichoacan/
Morelos	Sin información	64, 067	Gobierno Estado de Morelos
Nayarit	20,420	20,859	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoNayarit/
Nuevo León	238,245	237,758	https://www.facebook.com/gobiernoNuevoLeon/
Oaxaca	65,223	65,828	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoOaxaca/
Puebla	3,615	3,276	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoDigitalPuebla/
Querétaro	139,134	139,588	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoQueretaro/
Quintana Roo	20,180	19,800	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoQuintanaRoo/
San Luis Potosí	31,127	31,130	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoSanLuisPotosi/
Sinaloa	26,973	26,842	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoSinaloa/
Sonora	44,616	26,973	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoSonora/
Tabasco	49,912	49,818	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoTabasco/
Tamaulipas	141, 333	141,053	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoTamaulipas/
Tlaxcala	73,969	73,540	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoTlaxcala/
Veracruz	170,623	172,052	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoVeracruz/
Yucatán	50,917	51,267	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoYucatan/
Zacatecas	72,861	73,971	https://www.facebook.com/GobiernoZacatecas/

Fuente: elaboración propia con base en la exploración de Facebook concluida el 27 de julio de 2017.

The above data allow us to verify the potential of social networks such as Facebook, a government can communicate more quickly with citizens, but we must not forget that they are active subjects.

Based on the monitoring carried out and based on the information variable, it was found that at least in 31 subnational governments Facebook is used as a network that allows agency representation (Mergel, 2013), that is, the presence of the corresponding government. It is a

means used to provide information about the government and its actions at the moment of the event.

The above suggests that the use that governments give to FB runs the risk of not being transcending to the extent that it is a unidirectional use, which despite being one of the strategies considered by Mergel (2013) breaks with the basic idea of using a social network that is the interaction or exchange of information. In any case, constant, truthful and up-to-date communication is an important factor in generating trust in the citizenry. With this strategy, only a virtual government presence is considered.

Regarding the interaction variable, it is striking that despite the data about the number of followers, which would imply a more dynamic relationship between governments and citizens, it was found that the publications made by governments have few comments and few reactions from the citizens. The publications are constant and usually refer to actions carried out, notices or cultural activities.

In the total of the subnational governments that use Facebook, the pages are enabled to make comments, however, the citizens occasionally make them, although it was found that they receive answers. This reflects that the publications made are not very attractive for citizens, so it would be necessary to define a strategy that achieves an approach with citizens.

When communication mechanisms are enabled through the FB platform, governments acquire commitments, perhaps this is the reason why there is no greater interest in redesigning content that is more attractive and leads to greater interaction.

The third variable of analysis was participation, as a result it was obtained that in no case is social networks used to summon or encourage the participation of citizens in a public matter.

As has been pointed out, open government is said to be open, because its pillars are: transparency, participation and collaboration. In this context, social networks can be a fundamental tool to get governments to open up to the society that is their reason for being. However, the mere use of social networks does not in itself represent having taken firm steps in the construction of the GA, since this would be achieved if at least Mergel's pull strategy were applied (2013).

Based on the findings, it is concluded that even though 31 subnational governments (out of a total of 32) make use of social networks, this does not mean that there is a close relationship between them and the citizens. It is true that different channels of communication are opened through the use of technological tools, specifically social networks such as Facebook (one of the best known) and that, due to the trend, its use among citizens has increased, but despite this, build a strategy that allows laying the foundations of a closer relationship.

Social networks are an opportunity to link governments with society, to establish relationships of proximity, but it is necessary to consider some aspects to generate better and greater results:

- Define clear objectives about the use of social networks,
- Define what network (s) will be used, why and for what,
- Establish as a commitment to respond to comments, suggestions or criticisms issued by citizens.
- Channel comments, suggestions or criticism in order to transform them into inputs for improvement.
- Consider the permanent updating of the network that will be used, for this it is necessary to have financial, organizational and human resources.
- Establish monitoring mechanisms for the actions undertaken in response to the demonstrations made by citizens through the networks.

The social networks allow to press immediately what is the opinion of the citizenship about the governmental performance, its use is not synonymous with modernity per se, but it is a first step towards opening up.

This study may have the limitation of not establishing a ranking in the use of social networks, but it was not the objective, however, if it can set the tone for subsequent studies in the field of subnational governments to delve into the subject.

Conclusions

Digital social networks are a technological innovation that has changed the behavior of society, the way of communicating and sharing affinities or opinions, however, despite being an opportunity for governments not only to approach citizens, but also that instill greater confidence, has not yet been able to establish a strategy that allows for the sense of participation and collaboration that requires, for example, an open government model.

The mere use of Facebook or Twitter does not create public value while only providing information in a unidirectional way, that is, when only digital social networks are understood as something modern, that everyone uses, and that in doing so only government action is publicized, leaving out the possibility of social participation.

The most advanced use in the use of social networks is the greatest challenge for governments and suggests the possibility of carrying out actions such as defining public policies or making decisions based on participation through these communication channels, however, still there are great limitations for this.

The exchange of information at present has undergone a reconfiguration from the use of digital social networks; In addition, we can point out that a high percentage of the young population is an assiduous user, which represents the possibility of achieving citizens more interested in public affairs. Social networks also generate an important influence in the opinion of citizens, this can be translated into a source of transcendental legitimacy.

With this exploratory work it can be noticed that most of the subnational governments in the country have opted for the management and use of social networks, but this is only identified with the trends of digitalization, a virtual presence is achieved that does not translate into confidence of the citizenship, or in a close relationship. Establishing a bidirectional relationship generates commitments, collaboration and transparency.

Therefore, the idea of open government, although it has advanced in Mexico and has an action plan, it is essential to achieve other changes from the use of ICT, specifically social networks, changes that range from organizational culture until the creation of mechanisms to consider the opinion of citizens. Achieving collaboration is something fundamental, it would mean going hand in hand with society in the construction of a new way of governing.

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