



Social media uses amongst adolescents: motives, minority stress and eudaimonic well-being

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Título: Uso de redes sociales en adolescentes: motivación, estrés de minorías y bienestar eudaimónico.

Resumen: *Introducción:* la evidencia científica sobre los efectos del uso de medios sociales en línea sobre el bienestar en la población adolescente es heterogénea. En general, usos pasivos (recepción, visualización de contenidos sin interacción) y mayor tiempo de pantalla se relacionan con menor bienestar en contraposición con usos activos (interacciones directas e intercambios interpersonales). *Objetivo:* Esta investigación explora el tipo y motivo de uso de medios sociales, estableciendo su diferencia por identidad de género y orientación sexual, así como efectos sobre bienestar eudaimónico y estrés de minorías. *Método:* estudio transversal, 1259 adolescentes; 14-19 años ($M = 16.19$; $DE = 1.08$). Escala motivos de uso de redes sociales, Bienestar eudaimónico, Estrés de minorías, tiempo de pantalla, tipo de perfil. *Resultados:* mayor tiempo de uso se relaciona con búsqueda de pareja, conexión social o establecer amistades. Los adolescentes gay y bisexuales (GB) perciben más estresores distales en línea. Las mujeres tienen mayores niveles de bienestar. *Discusión:* los perfiles públicos en hombres GB favorecen la autoexpresión, aunque el estrés de minorías puede relacionarse con discriminación, rechazo o exclusión. La socialización diferenciada puede contribuir a un nivel elevado de bienestar en las mujeres. Usos activos como pasivos favorecen el bienestar eudaimónico de los adolescentes.

Palabras clave: Medios sociales. Redes sociales en línea. Bienestar eudaimónico. Estrés de minorías. Adolescencia.

Abstract: *Introduction:* The scientific evidence regarding the effects of online social media use on the well-being of adolescents is mixed. In general, passive uses (receiving, viewing content without interacting) and more screen time are related to lower well-being when compared with active uses (direct interactions and interpersonal exchanges). *Objectives:* This study examines the types and motives for social media usage amongst adolescents, differentiating them by gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as its effects on eudaimonic well-being and minority stress. *Method:* A cross-sectional study was conducted with 1259 adolescents, aged 14 to 19 ($M = 16.19$; $SD = 1.08$), analysing the Scale of Motives for Using Social Networking Sites, eudaimonic well-being, the Sexual Minority Adolescent Stress Inventory, screen time and profile type. *Results:* The results found that longer use time is related to finding partners, social connection and friendships; that gay and bisexual (GB) adolescents perceive more distal stressors online; and that females have higher levels of well-being. *Discussion:* The public profiles of GB males increase self-expression, although minority stress can be related to discrimination, rejection or exclusion. Differentiated socialization may contribute to a higher level of well-being in females, with both active and passive uses positively effecting eudaimonic well-being in adolescents.

Keywords: Social media. Online social networks. Eudaimonic well-being. Minority stress. Adolescents.

Introduction

The effects of the use of electronic devices on the mental health of young people is a highly topical issue, as indicated by the recent report on the impact of technology on adolescence conducted by UNICEF Spain (UNICEF, 2022). This study found that one out of every three Spanish adolescents between the ages of 14 and 19 (the first to fourth years of compulsory secondary education; 600,000 participants) is associated with a problematic use of the Internet and social media that is having an impact on their academic development, relationships and mental health. One of the primary risks to which they are exposed is cyberbullying, particularly aimed at aspects related to gender identity, functional diversity, obesity and sexual orientation. The use of social media was also found to generate positive emotions, like joy (96.9% of the cases), peace of mind (81.6%), amusement (78.9%) and feeling supported (71.6%).

The scientific evidence regarding the negative and positive effects of social media use on the well-being of adoles-

cents is mixed (Course-Choi & Hammond, 2021). Some meta-analyses have identified not only the negative effects of screen time on self-esteem, self-image, depression and/or social anxiety and stress, but also positive effects related to the perception of social support (Course-Choi & Hammond, 2021; Meier & Reinecke, 2020), mood and life satisfaction (Webster et al., 2021). Problematic use is notably related – moderately and negatively – to different variables of well-being, such as life satisfaction, happiness and subjective well-being (Appel et al., 2020; Valkenburg, 2022). Other meta-analyses distinguish the effects depending on the use (especially intensive or problematic use), although with somewhat ambiguous conclusions that present a wide variety of consequences depending on the population group, type of use and the indicator of well-being or ill-being (Appel et al., 2020; Valkenburg, 2022). For example, passive use is related to less agency¹ and worse mental health, as it generates discontent with self-image, especially amongst young women (Kerestes & Stulhofer, 2020; Orben et al., 2022) and some groups of bisexuals and gay men (Filice et al., 2020; Sumter et al., 2022). One of the possible explanations for these results is related to the different definitions and measurements

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¹ According to cognitive social theory, agency refers to a person's ability to develop and direct their actions to achieve certain aims and objectives (Bandura, 2006).

of well-being: eudaimonic, hedonic, relational, subjective well-being, life satisfaction or psychological well-being, amongst others, as well as the measurements that focus more on the problematic uses of social networks that usually have a direct effect on well-being (Valkenburg, 2022).

Studies related to hedonic well-being or the subjective experience of pleasure and satisfaction in the use of online social media have found that the increased social capital and positive feedback that come from interactions help to increase well-being in teenagers, while social comparison and exposure to risk situations like cyberbullying and grooming decrease well-being (Appel et al., 2020). Some meta-analyses have also found that problematic use increases negative emotions and dissatisfaction with life, especially in pre-adolescents (Orben et al., 2022, Valkenburg, 2022). Less research has been done into the potential effects of the use of online social media on eudaimonic well-being amongst adolescents (Meier & Reinecke, 2021).

Eudaimonic well-being refers to the experience of self-realization, authenticity and meaningfulness in people (Meier & Reinecke, 2021). Self-realization seeks to actualize the self and be a better person; authenticity is connected to the ability to behave in a way that aligns with one's true or core self; and meaningfulness is related to the search for purpose and coherence in life regarding what makes life worth living or important (Meier & Reinecke, 2020; Valkenburg, 2022). Eudaimonic well-being emphasizes the long-term well-being that derives from facing different challenges (Vohs et al., 2019), looking for meaning or purpose, increasing personal understanding and growth. In short, it represents a more holistic psychological well-being and prosperity, where self-realization, self-discovery, the perception of one's own potential, the meaning of purpose in life, investment in meaningful situations and personal expression are all relevant (Schutte et al., 2013). Understanding the effects of online social media on the eudaimonic well-being of adolescents allows for a more comprehensive perspective. As Meier and Reinecke (2021) observe, 'we can obtain a more complete and deeper understanding of social media's mental health impacts by considering the eudaimonic side of well-being' (p.2).

Online Social Media Uses, Motives for Use and Well-being

In studies on the use of social networks, well-being and mental health, the focus is placed on three main antecedent variables: active use, passive use and screen time (frequency or duration) (Meier & Reinecke, 2021). Active uses range from mass direct interactions through comments or posting content to interpersonal exchanges in the form of private messages (Verduyn et al., 2017). Passive uses, on the other hand, refer to receiving content of any kind without interaction, using electronic devices for no specific purpose (Webster et al., 2021) and viewing the profiles of other users without interacting (Verduyn et al., 2017).

Both the active and passive use of online social media

have a motivational goal for the user. As observed by Bucknell and Kottasz (2020), 'the different uses are driven by different motivations' (p.465). The motives for use refer to the social and psychological motivations that prompt adolescents to use online social media (Pertegal et al., 2019; Throuvala et al., 2019). The three most studied motives for using social networks are maintaining relationships (active use), and searching for information and entertainment/amusement (passive uses) (Throuvala et al., 2019). More recent studies have expanded this group, adding the pursuit of partners, affection, self-expression, self-realization and social recognition (active uses) and social connection (passive use) (Bucknell & Kottasz, 2020; Mittman et al., 2021). Active and passive uses combined with motives explain the aims behind the use of online social media amongst adolescents.

The hypotheses related to the active and passive use of online social media have indicated that passive use is related to higher levels of ill-being, as it produces jealousy and a higher level of social comparison, while active use is associated with positive effects on well-being by offering higher levels of support and positive feedback (Verduyn et al., 2017). In recent years, however, these hypotheses have been challenged, as results have been found that contradict the proposals made by Verduyn et al. (2017) and have determined that passive use can also have positive effects (Meier et al., 2020) and that active use can also decrease well-being (Kross et al., 2021). In a revision of their model, Verduyn et al. (2022) added more theoretical information, like the need to bear in mind, with active use, both reciprocity and the type of emotionality in the messages (especially if they are warm or intimate), since they are usually related to better well-being. With passive use, it is essential to consider the importance of the content consumed on online social networks for personal self-worth, since increased social comparison usually has a negative effect on well-being. However, given the newness of the model, specific measures have not yet been designed.

The Use of Online Social Media and Minority Stress

Some studies have highlighted the importance of ascertaining the excess stress to which stigmatized or oppressed social groups are exposed on online social media as a result of everyday experiences as occupants of categories that are not usually hegemonic. This stress, termed 'minority stress' (Meyer, 2003), is related to different uses of social media (Saha et al., 2019) and lower levels of well-being (Camp et al., 2020). Discrimination, violence and hate speech on social media comprise a source of stress for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) adolescents and are considered distal or contextual stressors. These differ from proximal stressors, internal stressors that an individual may experience as a consequence of external violence, such as expectations of rejection or internalized self-hatred (Mondal et al., 2017; Schragger et al., 2018). Social networks provide community spaces for LGB

adolescents, where they can express themselves and identify with peers, and where they can find emotional support and information, in addition to strategies for handling these stressors (Brandt & Carmichael, 2020; Selkie et al., 2020). In their review, Escobar-Viera et al. (2018) found that LGB individuals seek out social support and connection on online social media platforms as the primary motive for using them, and they could serve as a protective variable in negative situations like depression. The authors recommend expanding research into the quality of the experiences on social networks based on active and passive use and motives for use.

The Current Study

There is, then, a considerable gap in the literature on the effects of the use types – active versus passive – of social media on eudaimonic well-being amongst adolescents, especially females and LGB individuals. Moreover, existing studies have very mixed results regarding the influence of some uses on well-being as opposed to others. To help fill this gap, the following exploratory study focuses on the principle objectives of a) exploring the differences between the active and passive use of social media according to gender identity and sexual orientation; and b) analysing the relationships between the motives for the active and passive use of online social media, eudaimonic well-being and minority stress in teenagers.

Method

Participants

An incidental sample comprised 1259 students aged 14 to 19 from 10 different schools in the Community of Madrid who were enrolled during the 2021-22 academic year in compulsory secondary education (ESO), higher secondary education or vocational training (FP). 53.1 % of the students who participated were cis females and 46.9% were cis males. 85.7% self-identified as heterosexual, 12.5% as bisexual and 1.7% as gay/lesbian. The ages ranged between 14 and 19 ($M = 16.19$; $SD = 1.08$). 53.2% were in the third year of ESO, 30.7% in the fourth year of ESO and 15.5% in higher secondary education or vocational training.

Measurements

The measurements used in the study are presented below. For the study of the internal consistency and reliability of the scores in the sample, the study followed the directives of Viladrich et al. (2017).

Sociodemographic variables. Information was obtained about gender identity (cis female, cis male, trans female, trans male, other), sexual orientation (heterosexual, gay/lesbian, bisexual), age, academic year, duration of screen time on social network/interpersonal social network sites (from 0 to 5

hours or more) and the social network profile type (public or private).

Scale of Motives for Using Social Networking Sites (SMU-SNS). The Spanish version (Pertegal et al., 2019) of this 27-item scale was used to evaluate different motives for use on a seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = Absolutely False to 7 = Absolutely True). This questionnaire has nine subscales that measure the active uses of social networks, like dating, new friendships, academic purposes, social recognition and self-expression, and the passive uses of social networks, like social connection, following, entertainment and information. Pertegal et al. (2019) reported an average Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability of between .77 and .90 according to the subscale. This study found favourable evidence for a nine factor model ($X^2 = 1028.11$, $gl = 288$, $CFI = 0.959$, $TLI = 0.950$, $RMSEA[CI90\%] = .045$ [.04, .05]). The internal consistency reliability for the different dimensions was above 0.80 in every dimension (Cronbach's alpha between 0.82 and 0.92; McDonald's omega range between 0.84 and 0.96). Another model that examined nine factors and two higher order factors (active and passive) also demonstrated a good fit ($X^2 = 1426.84$, $gl = 314$, $CFI = 0.939$, $TLI = 0.932$, $RMSEA[CI90\%] = .05$ [.05, .06]), justifying the creation of an average score for active and passive uses.

Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-being (QEWB). A Spanish version of the 21-item questionnaire by Waterman et al. (2010) adapted by Salavera and Usán (2019) was used. This scale measures the degree of eudaimonic well-being (1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree). This work uses three of the dimensions from the four-factor structure proposed by Schutte et al. (2013). The scale proposea the following factors: a) sense of purpose or the development of potential for self-knowledge and growth (items 9, 2, 21, 6, 11, 1 and 16); b) a commitment to activities with value or importance, which play a significant role in understanding the world (items 18, 15, 17 and 10); (c) living according to one's core beliefs, expressing one's self (items 13, 8, 14, 4 and 5); and (d) the will to work hard when confronted with a difficulty (items 19, 20, 7, 12 and 3). However, as indicated by Schutte et al. (2013) and in the interest of cognitive parsimony – that is, to be able to compare the dimensions with the main theoretical models – only the first three factors were used, due to the methodological limitations posed by the inverse wording in the items in the scale by Waterman et al. (2010) translated by Salavera and Usan (2019). Schutte et al. (2013) observed an unacceptable average Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability (between $\alpha = .61$ and $\alpha = .77$). This study, using the first three dimensions proposed by Schutte et al. (2013), analysed a model with three correlated factors and obtained good fit indices ($X^2 = 958.85$, $gl = 87$, $CFI = .96$, $TLI = .95$, $RMSEA[CI90\%] = .09$ [.08, .09]). The internal consistency reliability was acceptable for the three subscales based on the categorical omega (0.78, 0.79 and 0.79 respectively), but inadequate for a subscale with the Cronbach's alpha (0.63, 0.79 and 0.78 respectively).

Sexual Minority Adolescent Stress Inventory, Social Marginalization Subscale (SMASI-SO). The eight items in this subscale provide a unidimensional average of self-perception (1 = Never to 5 = Always) for situations of marginalization or abuse for reasons of sexual identity or orientation. The items in this subscale were adapted to online situations. Schrage et al. (2018) observed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .96 for this subscale. The study data confirm a unidimensional structure with good fit indices ($X^2 = 122.47$, $gl = 20$, $CFI = 1.00$, $TLI = 1.00$, $RMSEA [CI90\%] = .06 [.05, .08]$). Moreover, an excellent internal consistency reliability was obtained with the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .91$) and categorical omega ($w = .93$).

Procedure

The data was collected during the 2021 school year. The schools were selected at random in the Community of Madrid, ensuring that 50% were public and 50% private/charter schools. After obtaining authorization from the schools, parental consent and the informed assent of the minors, the online questionnaire was administered during class hours. All the participants received the same instructions and were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation and the confidentiality of their responses prior to giving their consent to participate in the study. One person from the research team went to the school while the questionnaire was being administered to answer any questions that might arise. The procedure was approved by the Ethics Committee (Reference: 0203202106321).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were obtained for each variable, along with a visual histogram examination and normality tests (not included in this article). The scores for each dimension were calculated using the average of the items. Due to the fact that only a few participants stated that their sexual orientation was not heterosexual, and in order to improve the statistical power, a single category was created for lesbians, gays and bisexuals (LGB). Additionally, the screen times during the week and on the weekend were averaged to obtain a single score and be able to make comparisons with the other variables and scales. As the difference in gender identity and sexual orientation did not meet the application assumptions for parametric tests (t-test or ANOVA), according to the main study variables, they were analysed using the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test. They were treated as four separate groups (cis/heterosexual males, GB males, cis/heterosexual females, LB females). The Spearman corre-

lations were studied between the main study variables. Three exploratory linear regression analyses were performed (one for each well-being dimension), and active and passive use were studied as independent variables (not in their subdivisions, as a general rule).

Results

Media Use by Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

Regarding the use of social networks, a majority of the participants reported an 85.8% use during the week and 90.6% on the weekends. They also stated that they spend an average of three or more hours a day of screen time on social media sites. They spent slightly less screen time on instant messaging platforms, with a greater difference between use during the week – at least three hours or more a day amongst slightly less than half the students (48.1%) – and the weekends – three or more hours a day amongst a majority of the students (66.4%). Finally, 75.4% reported having private profiles on the social networks, while 24.6% said that their profiles were public.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the main study variables (type of school, uses and motives for social network use, eudaimonic well-being, minority stress) and the results of the group comparison.

The results in Table 1 show statistically significant differences between heterosexual males and females and LGB individuals regarding their public profile, screen time on social and interpersonal networks, motives for active uses (with the exception of pursuing dates, $p = .84$) and passive uses (with the exception of entertainment, $p = .15$) and the eudaimonic well-being dimensions of meaningfulness and authenticity, although not self-realization ($p = .71$).

- GB males and heterosexual females: the former choose to have a public profile, while the latter spend more time on social networks.
- Heterosexual males and GB males, with the latter spending more time on online social networks, making more use of social media to create new friendships, for self-expression, maintaining social connections and obtaining information. GB males perceive the most minority stress.
- Heterosexual males and heterosexual females use social media for academic purposes and following.
- Heterosexual males and LB females, with the latter having higher levels of eudaimonic well-being related to meaningfulness and authenticity.

Table 1
Descriptive data by gender identity and sexual orientation

	Cis Males				Cis Females				X ²	p
	Heterosexual		GB		Heterosexual		LB			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Public profile	1.25	0.43	1.44	0.51	1.21	0.41	1.31	0.47	12.92	0.005
Screen time Social networks	3.56	0.82	3.24	1.12	3.65	0.94	3.65	0.89	10.39	0.016
Screen time Interpersonal networks	2.77	0.88	3.31	1.09	3.10	0.94	2.98	0.90	43.42	0.000
Active uses	3.17	1.15	3.63	1.37	3.47	1.16	3.49	1.11	23.44	0.000
Dating	2.39	1.60	2.28	1.64	2.33	1.60	2.20	1.43	0.84	0.840
New friendships	3.75	1.85	4.60	2.09	4.32	1.86	4.46	1.88	34.29	0.000
Academic purposes	4.29	1.80	4.52	2.17	4.79	1.70	4.64	1.74	22.38	0.000
Social recognition	2.59	1.56	2.78	1.72	2.73	1.56	2.64	1.47	3.04	0.386
Self-expression	2.85	1.64	3.95	1.85	3.17	1.65	3.51	1.77	29.04	0.000
Passive uses	4.16	1.17	4.76	1.28	4.55	1.20	4.65	1.13	44.36	0.000
Social connection	3.32	1.76	4.41	1.85	3.82	1.78	4.07	1.84	36.36	0.000
Following	3.16	1.69	3.63	1.73	3.82	1.71	3.77	1.65	46.39	0.000
Entertainment	5.34	1.51	5.65	1.56	5.56	1.31	5.58	1.33	5.38	0.146
Information	4.81	1.57	5.33	1.73	5.00	1.55	5.18	1.38	10.23	0.017
Minority stress	1.61	0.86	2.13	1.21	1.52	0.73	1.78	0.78	37.51	0.000
Self-realization	3.57	0.87	3.58	0.85	3.61	0.85	3.52	0.91	1.38	0.710
Meaningfulness	4.04	1.14	4.14	1.15	4.34	1.05	4.49	0.93	29.25	0.000
Authenticity	3.98	1.07	3.99	0.99	4.25	0.97	4.33	0.98	25.36	0.000

Note: Active uses and passive uses = SMU-SNS (uses and motives for social network use; QEWB (eudaimonic well-being), minority stress = SMASI. X²=Kruskal-Wallis statistic with three degrees of freedom

Relationships between Motives for Active and Passive Online Social Media Use, Eudaimonic Well-being and Minority Stress

relationships between them with the sociodemographic variables, minority stress and the three eudaimonic well-being dimensions.

Table 2 shows the general correlations between active and passive use and screen time on networks and the interre-

Table 2
Bivariate correlations

	Active uses	Passive uses	Screen time Social networks	Screen time Interpersonal networks	Minority Stress	Self-realization	Meaningfulness	Authenticity
<i>Sociodemographic variables</i>								
Age	.112**	0.048	.135**	.165**	.183**	.109**	.084**	.089**
Gender identity	.127**	.168**	.079**	.166**	.073**	0.012	.148**	.138**
Sexual orientation	.066*	.103**	-0.011	0.039	.169**	-0.020	.072*	.062*
Public profile	.139**	0.050	0.018	0.001	.056*	0.021	-0.032	-0.010
<i>Uses</i>								
Screen time Social networks	-	.131**	-	-	.076**	0.002	0.000	0.001
Screen time Interpersonal networks	-	.118**	.330**	-	.161**	.059*	0.021	0.036
Active uses	-	.638**	.202**	.218**	.254**	.259**	.246**	.227**
Dating	.679**	.319**	.334**	.215**	.207**	.208**	.128**	0.029
New friendships	.778**	.522**	.487**	.166**	.207**	.189**	.192**	.180**
Academic purposes	.514**	.416**	.356**	0.027	0.007	.079**	.117**	.220**
Social recognition	.719**	.451**	.429**	.176**	.217**	.255**	.211**	.136**
Passive uses	-	-	.131**	.118**	.081**	.286**	.407**	.364**
Social connection	.572**	.788**	1.000	.121**	.159**	.158**	.203**	.245**
Following	.603**	.790**	.586**	.143**	.156**	.174**	.213**	.284**
Entertainment	.320**	.616**	.266**	.168**	.058*	-.056*	.138**	.266**
Information	.347**	.680**	.343**	-0.023	-0.024	-0.030	.292**	.415**

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. Gender identity: 0 = male, 1 = female. Sexual orientation: 0 = Heterosexual, 1 = LGB

Regarding the correlations of the sociodemographic variables, being older is very slightly related to longer screen time on social media and a higher perception of minority stress. There is also a very low, but statistically significant, re-

lationship with gender identity: there is a relationship between females and well-being in meaningfulness and authenticity, the active and passive use of media, screen time and minority stress. Weak relationships were also found between

being LGB and minority stress, both uses and the dimensions of meaningfulness and authenticity. Finally, there is a relationship between having a public profile and active use.

Table 3
Multiple linear regression models

Variable	β	IC95%		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		Li	Ls		
DV: Self-realization					
Active uses	.13	.05	.15	3.76	.00
Passive uses	.22	.11	.21	6.14	.00
DV: Meaningfulness					
Active uses	-.01	-.07	.05	-.32	.74
Passive uses	.43	.33	.45	12.84	.00
DV: Authenticity					
Active uses	.01	-.05	.06	.02	.87
Passive uses	.39	.27	.39	11.29	.00

Table 3 presents the regression analysis. For the self-realization model, 10% (corrected R^2) of the variability in the scores is explained by active uses ($\beta = 0.13$) and passive uses ($\beta = .22$). In the case of the dimension of meaningfulness and the variability of 18%, active use is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.13$), but passive use is ($\beta = .43$). For the authenticity dimension, the results were similar to those found with meaningfulness, explaining 15% of the variability in these scores.

Discussion and Conclusion

Online social media offer adolescents and young people an opportunity to communicate, express themselves and identify with peer groups, which can expose them to risks like cyberbullying and negative emotional states, although they can also have positive consequences for their emotional well-being (Appel et al., 2020; Valkenburg, 2022). The motives that lead adolescents to use these media are quite varied, although the specialist literature usually talks about active and passive uses having different effects on well-being (Verduyn et al., 2017; Verduyn et al., 2022). This study focused on the type of motive for social media use amongst a groups of adolescents and young people, establishing their difference by gender identity and sexual orientation, in addition to the effects on eudaimonic well-being and minority stress.

The first results found that sexual orientation and gender identity are determinant variables for differential social media use. The finding that adolescent GB males stand out in their use of public profiles reflects studies on the importance of visibilizing their actions and self-expression (Brandt & Carmichael, 2020; Birnholtz & Macapagal, 2021; Selkie et al., 2020). Similarly, their increased use of time on interpersonal networks agrees with studies that examine the use of social networks for dating or pursuing partners (Johnson et al., 2017), establishing social connections and making new friendships (Brandt & Carmichael, 2020; Gudelunas, 2012), as well as learning about themselves (Fox & Ralston, 2016). GB adolescents also perceive more online distal stressors,

which is consistent with the fact that, in large part, online hate speech is aimed at this population (Mondal et al., 2017), as is online social exclusion, rejection, discrimination and abusive behaviour (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018).

The higher levels of well-being related to meaningfulness and authenticity amongst females may be related to what some studies have found about males generally being less interested in pursuing eudaimonic well-being until they reach the 30–40 age bracket (LeFebvre & Huta, 2021). These results contradict studies that have found lower levels of well-being amongst females due to the effects of social comparison on online social media (Kerestes & Stulhofer, 2020; Orben et al., 2022). Additionally, the fact that these differences are significant in the dimensions of meaningfulness and authenticity, but not self-realization, could indicate dynamics related to differentiated socialization. It is, therefore, no surprise that females – above all heterosexual females – report that their most common motives for use are for academic purposes and following, both of which involve searching for information on social networks (finding out what is happening, learning new things, amongst others). These motives have an influence on the search for educational and personal knowledge, which can help them see what is important, meaningful or real.

The correlational findings qualify the relationship between the different variables, with active and passive uses having the most significant and moderate correlations, especially regarding the dimensions of eudaimonic well-being and minority stress. Active uses can be related to minority stress inasmuch as interactions with the others, whether private or public, may entail a greater exposure to violence, abuse or discrimination (Escobar-Viera et al., 2018). Active uses can also be closely related to self-realization, when they are aimed at searching for identity through self-expression or interactions through which one can present oneself to the world, for example in the creation of social media content (Bucknell & Kottasz, 2020). Passive uses, in turn, can be related to self-realization, since searching for information, following or seeing how others reach their targets and objectives contributes to personal growth (Verduyn et al., 2022). With meaningfulness, active uses make it possible to establish ties or maintain them (Litt et al., 2020). Moreover, passive use involves browsing content that may be inspirational and, therefore, meaningful (Meier et al., 2020). Regarding authenticity, active uses may involve revealing oneself and interacting authentically on social media (Toma, 2017), as well as the possibility of offering a more realistic self-presentation in profiles, which has been connected to higher levels of positive affect and life satisfaction in other studies (Orben, 2020). Passive use may be related to the self-affirmation produced by viewing a profile (Toma, 2017) and the ability to obtain sources of personal meaningfulness from online social networks that have positive effects (Meier & Reinecke, 2020). All these results agree with earlier studies that show that both active and passive uses can have positive and negative effects on well-being (Kross et al., 2021; Meier et al.,

2020) and the importance of explaining these effects in more detail.

The regression analysis provided important additional information on the correlations regarding the dimensions of well-being and motives for use. The finding that predicts active use as a source of self-realization corresponds to the above discussion. The same occurs with the results that predict that passive use is a precursor to well-being related to meaningfulness and authenticity. However, it is necessary to qualify these results in the light of studies that have found that passive use related to following and comparison with others can predict less well-being related to authenticity (Yang et al., 2018) and meaningfulness and the importance of meaning (Lutz & Schneider, 2021). Clearly, further research is required.

To conclude, this study provides an approach to how to explore some relationships between the social media variables of use, motives for use and well-being amongst adolescents. However, future work needs to increase the sample size, especially regarding LGB individuals, to be able to explore these differences in greater detail. It would also be interesting to conduct studies that use other scales to measure eudaimonic well-being and motives for use, with findings that could provide more clarity and information.

From an applied perspective, these findings could be integrated into psychoeducational and mental health prevention strategies that focus on the responsible use of electronic devices by teenagers and their effects on well-being. It also broadens the general understanding of the well-being pro-

duced by online social networks, beyond the positive emotion of instant gratification, and provides a way to focus on their potential effects on self-realization, authenticity and meaningfulness in adolescents. In the particular case of LGB teenagers, these results could be used as part of proposals to prevent minority stress, since this group is often the target of intimidation, abuse, discrimination and violence on online social media.

Complementary information

CRedit authorship contribution statement.- Miguel Ángel López-Sáez: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data Curation, Investigation, Writing -original draft, Writing -review & editing, Visualization, Supervision. Vanesa Pérez-Torres: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data Curation, Investigation, Writing -original draft, Writing -review & editing, Visualization, Supervision. Yolanda Pastor: Methodology, Investigation, Writing -review & editing. Luis Lobato-Rincón: Methodology, Investigation, Writing -review & editing. Helena Thomas: Methodology, Investigation, Writing -review & editing. Ariadna Angulo-Brunet: Methodology, Formal analysis, Validation.

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