

SOCIAL MEDIA AT THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY: A Case Study at the Federal University of Amapá

AS MÍDIAS SOCIAIS NA UNIVERSIDADE PÚBLICA: Um Estudo de Caso na Universidade Federal do Amapá
MEDIOS SOCIALES EN LA UNIVERSIDAD PÚBLICA: un estudio de caso en la Universidad Federal de Amapá

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ABSTRACT:

The advent of the internet has enabled changes in the way people communicate. The current research endeavours to analyse the organizational communication process, through social media, at the Academic Department of Philosophy and Human Sciences - DFCH, at the Federal University of Amapá. Methodologically, it is a qualitative, descriptive approach, configured as a case study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, with the participation of 10 administrative technicians. The results reveal that communication in the DFCH occurs through integrated management systems (SIPAC, SIGRH and SIGAA), by email and institutional website and, informally, by WhatsApp. As a result of the research, it was proposed the creation of groups linked to the Dean Special Advisory Board (AER), to improve the communication process.

KEYWORDS: Organizational Communication; Internet; Social media.

Introduction

The technological evolution which occurred in the last decades contributed to intense cultural, economic, political and mainly social transformations (SILVA, 2017). With the advent of the internet, Castells (2003) affirms that society started to live in a network,

in which people can share, dialogue and discuss different and countless types of content very quickly in a space which Lévy (1999) has called virtual or cyberspace.

Since its inception, the internet has grown significantly and its use has been increasingly amplified and diversified. According to the Brazilian Media Survey carried out in 2015, 76% of people access the internet every day with an average daily frequency of 4 hours and 59 minutes, from Monday to Friday and 4 hours and 24 minutes on weekends.

Several communication and social interaction platforms appeared in this scenario, amongst them, social media. According to Recuero (2012), these tools enable swift connection between individuals who use them, allowing information to be shared very quickly.

Currently, it was noticed that at the Federal University of Amapá, the communication that took place through official printed documents (memos, letters, minutes of meetings, reports, amongst others) is going through a transformation process. Especially in the Academic Department of Philosophy and Human Sciences at the University, wherein it was possible to notice the presence of digital platforms being constantly used for that organizational environment communication; as a result of that, the following question has risen: **How does the communication process in the Academic Department of Philosophy and Human Sciences at UNIFAP occur by means of social media?**

In order to address this question, the current study endeavours to analyse how the social media communication process occurs at the Academic Department of Philosophy and Human Sciences at UNIFAP. Methodologically, it is a qualitative research, with a descriptive nature, designed as a case study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and were treated and interpreted through content analysis based on Bardin (2011).

Our object of study utilizes management systems to streamline processes – the Integrated Management Systems: Integrated Patrimony, Administration and Contracts System (SIPAC), Integrated Human Resources System (SIGRH) and Integrated Management and Academic Activities System (SIGAA) were created by the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte - UFRN, with the strategic objective of assisting in the academic and administrative activities of the institution. Through cooperation agreements, UFRN is able to make those systems available to other Brazilian universities (FERREIRA, 2018). Amongst these institutions is UNIFAP, which, through the documents that allow and regulate this practice, also uses them to monitor institutional processes and improve its internal dialogue.

However, it was noticed in the study that the use of social media has also become associated with institutional routines. Thus, the research is justified given the need to understand how social media impacts communication in the organizational environment of an academic department at UNIFAP.

The article will be presented in five parts: a) introduction; b) theoretical framework – addressing topics such as organizational communication, internet and social media, which theoretically support the relevant discussions to the research problem; c) methodology; d) analysis and interpretation of results; and e) final considerations and references.

Organizational Communication

In Brazil, communication within organizations started to develop from the industrialization process that started late in the 19th century, when multinationals were installed in the country and started to make it possible to share experiences in the area. Initially it was termed as public relations, business journalism and press relations. Over the years, it has been named “business communication”, a term still widely used in the literature (KUNSCH, 2006).

Bueno (2009, p.3) is an author who utilizes the term “business communication” defining it as “a set of actions, strategies, plans, policies and products planned and developed by an organization to establish a permanent and systematic relationship with all its stakeholders”.

Corrêa (2005) argues that organizational communication has the primary function of establishing communication channels as well as respective tools for the company to optimize communication with its diverse audience. For the abovementioned author, any relationship between the organization and its stakeholders must be integrated and aligned with the same strategic vision, by a uniform discourse and with coherent messages.

Concomitantly, Kunsch (2006) understands organizational communication through an integrated perspective as a macro area. The author points out that this type of communication must, first and foremost, be understood as an inherent part of the nature of organizations and as a wide-ranging and complex phenomenon, not just as a simple transmission of information.

Having this wide-ranging and complex panorama of communication as a background, one of the main concepts developed by Kunsch (2003) was that of integrated organizational communication. In defense of this philosophy, the author explains that it

is about the merger of institutional, marketing, internal and administrative communication, which tends to form a communication mix.

Kunsch's (2003) reflections have been converted into scientific tools, as they demonstrate the comprehensive view of organizational communication within a complex context in which contemporary organizations are present.

Thereby, for organizations to survive, it is essential to develop relationships with different audience segments. This relationship can occur through the interaction processes that organizations develop (MARCHIORI, 2010).

According to Kunsch (2003) the areas of public relations and marketing are fundamental to direct organizational communication. Hence, public relations are in charge of institutional, internal and administrative communication; and the marketing department, for marketing (commercial) communication.

Furthermore, Baldissera (2009) highlights that organizational communication comprises three dimensions: a) communicated organization (has an authorized speech); b) communicating organization (presents an authorized speech and other communication processes that are updated whenever someone establishes a direct relationship with the organization); and c) spoken organization (communication processes that, despite not being directly related to the organization, are still intrinsic to it) In this sense, Kunsch (2014) also emphasizes the study of organizational communication through the instrumental, human, cultural and strategic dimensions, which, to be in line with the objectives defined in the current study, must be understood in the digital age context.

Such communications are the result of the diffusion and escalation of technologies. Corrêa (2005) defines that digital communication is the use of Digital Information and Communication Technologies and all the tools that derive from them as to facilitate and streamline the construction of any Integrated Communication process in organizations.

Lemos and Di Felice (2015) argue that digital communication and digital networks are not a subject or theme limited to a unique scope or discipline, neither are they limited to just a single sector of communication, or engineering, or systems that produce communication. According to the authors, they produce an all-encompassing transformation, which includes all sectors of human life, environment and technology.

Communications which used to be characterized by the classic unilateral transmission model, in which the dialogue was carried out only between a sender and a receiver; nowadays is spread through a diversity of actors, not only producing, but also distributing content.

Thus, on analysing digital communication as a possibility of social integration, Manfrin (2019) sustains that digital media in contemporary society are fundamental for daily life communication, given that through them, social integration takes place amongst peoples, cultures, organizations, etc. Based on such technological advances, society starts to develop a new behaviour with regards to the communicational processes, which becomes much more strategic and all-encompassing.

Corrêa (2005) also perceives digital communication as strategic, but states that for it to be successful in the organizational environment; it has to be inserted in the organization's general communication plan. Accordingly, Bueno (2000), on addressing the theme, also recognizes the strategic nature of communication processes within and without organizations.

In such scenario, Corrêa (2005) also highlights the evolution that occurred in the communication process: Presently, communication and technology share an indissoluble link and this relationship puts the communicator in a constant tension amidst the correlation between the science of Information and Communication Technologies - ICTs and the art of communicating.

Hence, organizational communication takes on a new level of uses and applications in the context of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). The emergence of social media caused the rupture of the standard methodology of information production (CORRÊA, 2009).

The understanding that organizations are an integral part of society and, therefore, are subject to the context of all these transformations that have occurred in recent times, is fundamental.

For Jenkins (2015), media convergence is a trend that the current media are adhering to as to adapt to the internet, given that it has its own language. According to the author, such communicational scenario is a cultural transformation, in which the new media and the old media are colliding and, ultimately, mixing. Jenkins (2015) further affirms that the idea of the new media swallowing the old media was, in fact, a mistake raised by some authors; what happens is that they are feeding on each other in a process of mutual contribution and transformation.

In the organizational scope, communication occurs in a strategic and integrated manner, according to the organizational mix developed by Kunsch (2003). Corrêa (2005) argues that there is no possibility of dealing with organizational digital communication without understanding and knowing the strategic global communication plan.

Digital communication is the use of Digital Information and Communication Technologies and all their current tools to facilitate and streamline the construction of any Integrated Communication process in organizations. Therefore, we are talking about the choice of those technological options, available in the environment or under development, whose use and application is the most appropriate for a specific company and their specific audiences. (CORRÊA, 2005, p. 102)

Thus, starting from the idea of integrated organizational communication, Corrêa (2005) understands that it is necessary to define and develop the integrated digital communication plan in the organizational environment.

Accordingly, Corrêa (2009) argues that a great trend is revealed in the world of digital platforms – the presence of organizations in digital spaces for relationship with strategic audiences, such as social networks on mobile devices.

In brief, digital communication is the result of the technological revolution, from the advent of the internet, which has led to a new communication format, in which the expansion of spaces for interaction between people in general and between organizations and their strategic audiences was enabled.

Castells (2003) argues that the internet is a means of communication that provoked profound changes in social relations. The author has pinpointed the emergence of this technology from military research at the time of the cold war, in the 1960s, in the very heart of the ideological and scientific confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States, fearing suffering a Soviet attack, created ARPANET.

With the end of the cold war, the United States in 1982 distributed the program to other countries and five years later released it for commercial purposes. In 1988, the program arrived in Brazil, which was linked to the United States through Brazilian universities and American institutions.

In the 1990s, the Internet had already spread and was structured as a new communication vehicle in organizations, so the World Wide Web became a flexible network, in which companies were able to create their own websites. In the Information Age, the Internet has become the technological basis for the organizational shape, as it has become the main information dissemination network and is considered as a communication medium that for the first time allowed the interaction of many people at the same time.

Castells (2003) sustains that in the last years the internet has been considered one of the largest and most powerful technological inventions, due to its power to make possible the exchange of information in real time, allowing the interconnection and

interaction amongst individuals from all over the world, way beyond their individual means.

According to Lemos and Di Felice (2015), our perception that the internet is not just a technical and economic resource, but something that has an impact on people's expectations regarding everything that happens around them is still in its cradle. Thus, given the countless transformations that occurred in the communicational process, Lemos and Di Felice (2015), understand that it is opportune to make the relationship between the communicational revolutions that occurred in the past and the contemporary communicational phenomenon:

We experienced the transition from orality to writing in the fourth or fifth millennium BC, which was the first great communicative technological innovation. Then, there was the second major innovation, that of typography in the 15th century with Gutenberg's invention of mobile characters. Beyond that, the third great innovation, which were that of electricity with the mass media (TV, cinema, press, etc.) and the various revolutions of the internet (LEMOS; DI FELICE, 2015, p.3).

In light of the chronological order of revolutions that occurred in the communicational process, the internet can be classified as the fourth revolution, encompassing broadband, web 2.0 and, finally, web 3.0 – the semantic web, which densifies mediation and 'programmed sociability' by algorithms, going beyond interactivity, as it starts to personalize relevant content according to personal preferences. Furthermore, there are already studies on web 4.0, being pre-established as web-symbiotic, wherein the human mind and machines can interact via symbiosis.

Web 3.0 or semantic web desires to decrease human's tasks and decisions and leave them to machines by providing machine-readable contents on the web. In General, web 3.0 is included into two main platforms, semantic technologies and social computing environment. The semantic technologies represent open standards that can be applied on the top of the web. The social computing environment allows human-machine co-operations and organizing a large number of the social web communities. Web 4.0 will be as a read-write-execution-concurrency web with intelligent interactions, but there is still no exact definition of it. Web 4.0 is also known as symbiotic web in which human mind and machines can interact in symbiosis (AGHAEI; NEMATBAKHSH; FARSANI, 2012, p.2).

In such scenario of discontinuity, it is observed that with each innovation that happens in this process, there is a rupture, which means that the internet of today is very different from the internet that appeared in the 1990s.

According to a survey conducted by IBGE in 2016 and 2017, it was found that the number of people aged 10 or over who accessed the internet went from 116 million in 2016 to 126.3 million in 2017. The highest percentage of accesses occurred amongst people aged 20 to 24 years, represented by 88.4% of the participants. Moreover, another relevant data brought by IBGE was the percentage of Internet access by elderly people aged 60 or over, as it increased from 24.7% in 2016 to 31.1% in 2017 (IBGE, 2017).

The Regional Study Centre for the development of the Information Society, CETIC (2020), revealed in 2015 that the cell phone was the preferred device by Brazilians for internet access, being used by 96% of the people studied; whilst the computer remained with 51%; the television with 22% and the video game device with 9%. Regarding the activities carried out through the internet, the research shows that the main purpose of the accesses is the activities of sending and receiving text, voice or image messages via apps.

According to Cipriani (2006, p. 15), we live in an era whose main characteristic is the "consolidation of the internet as an agent that transforms processes and means of communication". Castells (2003) concurs that the internet is a means of communication that allowed, for the first time, simultaneous mass communication. The author has also highlighted the social issue regarding access, pointing out that no matter how much the internet provides a vast net of communication amongst people all over the world, there is still a portion of society that does not have access to it.

Moreover, Castells (2003) states that the internet, besides being a powerful technology and an important means of communication, should also be seen as an integral part of social organization; as we are living in a network society centred on the internet. Lemos and Di Felice (2015, p.12) corroborate with that line of thought, affirming that:

When communicating on the network, we are inhabiting the network, thus acquiring a new way of organizing information and of relating to problems we face, as well as a new form of dialogue with different actors, which leads, above all else, to a new type of intelligence and knowledge.

Kunsch (2007) observes that it is in the very the scope of the new society with its constantly changing and complex scenarios that organizations do operate, struggling to maintain themselves, to fulfil their mission and vision and to cultivate their values.

The communication technologies make it possible for individuals to connect at all times, exchanging information and content much more swiftly than in the past. With the internet, it is possible to acquire knowledge, conduct negotiations and cross many

borders. Moreover, it is important to highlight that the internet has also provided the emergence of numerous digital platforms, amongst them, social media and social networks.

Social Media

Taking into account that individuals have the need to communicate, relate and interact with one another, it is noted that in present times such relationships started to occur in a much more diverse fashion; especially with the emergence of social media, which Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define as a group of internet applications that are based on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which enables the creation and exchanging of user-generated content. This notion is also shared by Bucher (2010) when analysing the material infrastructures of web 2.0 and power relations through software, leading to specific forms of online relationship between the individual with himself and with others.

Since the web 2.0 configuration, there have been several definitions for social media. For instance, Corrêa (2009, p. 164) conceptualizes that social media are “any technologies or online practices that allow the sharing of content, opinions, ideas, experiences and media, enabling timely conversations about whatever is deemed relevant”. For the author, the terms “sharing” and “conversations” are the expressions that transform the traditional way of communication. Furthermore, Corrêa (2009, p. 163) also points out that the increasing use of the so-called social media “enables any citizen capable of interacting with the tools available on the web to produce, use, comment and share information.”

Terra (2011, p. 2) adds that social media is “the media utilized by people through technologies and policies on the web, for the purpose of sharing opinions, ideas, experiences and perspectives.” The author also states that interaction amongst users is attained by texts, images, audio and video on blogs, podcasts, wikis, vlogs and so forth.

According to Torres (2018, p. 74), social media are “sites on the Internet built to allow the collaborative creation of content, social interaction and the sharing of information in various formats”. It follows naturally that the practice of conversation that take place in the digital age occurs mainly through computers and social networks (RECUERO, 2012).

Torres (2018) points that amongst the most influential social media are websites, blogs, social networks, collaborative sites and several other models that are geared towards multimedia communication, relationship amongst people, entertainment and

collaboration. Social media allows data and information to be created and then disseminated amongst people by users and for users, in other words, at the same time that a certain person produces and propagates information, such person is also the recipient or consumer of the data he has shared on the Internet.

It is important to remind one that the media – digital or otherwise – are not always available to anyone, as social inequalities often prevent people from having access; moreover, there are also factors of class, generation and other social markers of difference, such as digital education. However, social media allow those who access it to see, read and listen to certain content and then decide whether to share the information with other users. For having an openly accessible and collaborative nature, a large part of the information conveyed remains stored and available for the general consultation of anyone interested in that content (TORRES, 2018).

An important aspect that must be addressed on discussing social media is related to the most direct and simple ways of producing content to circulate it on the Internet. Hence, Telles (2010) highlights that the social networks present themselves as environments that resort to the expedient of gathering users who can, in addition to exposing private information, through videos and photos, proceed with interactivity with other people.

“Many people confuse the terms social networks for social media; often using them indistinctly” (TELLES, 2010, p. 19). However, social networks are a category of social media and it is a much broader definition. “They are sites on the internet built to allow the collaborative creation of content, social interaction and the sharing of information in different formats” (TELLES, 2010, p. 19). WhatsApp, for instance, which is the media highlighted in the current study, serves as a complementary support to the traditional media within organizations whilst is simplifying people's lives, increasing interaction between company and consumers, clarifying queries and concerns anytime, anywhere (CRUZ, 2015).

Methodology

The current section refers to the methodological structure utilized for the development of the present article. Its main objective was to analyse how the process of organizational communication through social media occurs at UNIFAP's DFCH. Thus, as to achieve the research original objectives, the methodology was structured in five parts: a) type of research; b) universe of research; c) instrument for data collection; d) data treatment; and e) results and discussions.

The research has a qualitative approach, which is meant “to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem” (CRESWELL, 2010, p.43). This type of research is appropriate to analyse the perspective of people who daily experience the situation which is being studied, considering the communication of the researcher in the field as an explicit part of the production of knowledge (FLICK, 2009).

The current research is also categorised as descriptive, given that its main purpose is to expose the characteristics of a certain population or phenomenon, being able to establish correlations between the variables and define their nature (VERGARA, 2015).

Finally, regarding its means, the current research is a case study, as it does an in depth empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon in its real-world context, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context may not be clearly evident (YIN, 2015).

According to Vergara (2015), the universe of research refers to a set of subjects willing to participate in the research process, with a scientific purpose. Hence, the current research universe consisted of 10 (ten) active technical-administrative UNIFAP effective employees, assigned to UNIFAP's DFCH, distributed in the following functional category levels: primary, secondary and higher education.

As to obtain the relevant data, interviews were conducted with a semi-structured script, containing open questions. They were applied verbally and individually to each participant in their work environment.

The use of the semi-structured interviews in the current study was due to the flexibility that the instrument allows during the data collection. Minayo (2004) states that this instrument may contain closed and open questions, which enable the researcher to clarify doubts and talk to the interviewee about the research topic, without the need to strictly follow the questions.

Data collection was carried out from October 17th to October 31st, 2019. As to achieve a better interpretation as well as to enable the re-reading of the collected data, the interviews were recorded using the Hi-Q MP3 voice recorder application. Thence, the recordings were saved in google drive, transcribed in google docs and later analysed based on the theory of content analysis (BARDIN, 2011).

The method of content analysis “becomes a set of techniques for analysing communications that uses systematic and objective procedures to describe the content of messages” (BARDIN, 2011, p.55). According to the author, this phase consists of three stages: a) pre-analysis; b) material exploration; and c) treatment of results.

Pre-analysis is the phase in which the researcher chooses and organizes all the material collected, observing its completeness, representativeness, homogeneity, pertinence and exclusivity. Material exploration is the phase in which the researcher carries out an in-depth study of the material collected, guided by the research problem, the objectives set and the theoretical framework. Finally, data treatment is the phase in which the researcher, supported by the results, must correlate the content of the collected material with the theoretical framework base, as to achieve valid and meaningful results.

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

In the current section, the results found in the study will be presented. The data obtained refers to the field research carried out from October 17th to October, 31st, 2019; presenting the results corresponding to the perception of the DFCH technical-administrative staff about organizational communication through social media in their department. Of the 14 technical-administrative workers assigned to the unit, 10 answered the interview, which corresponds to 71% of the research universe.

Regarding their positions in the university, the majority of interviewees were administrative assistants (7), followed by executive secretary (1) and academic assistants (2). Five civil servants are assigned to the DFCH board whilst the other 5 coordinate undergraduate courses linked to the department. Regarding length of service in the department, most employees have been working for more than five years (5), with the rest working for less than two years (3) and for exactly two years (2). As for the level of functional category (education), the research reached only the levels of "secondary and higher" categories, with the majority of respondents being part of the secondary level category (7), and the others of higher level (3); there was no respondent in the fundamental level category.

The first question regarding sought to verify the perception of the technicians assigned to the DFCH about the concept of organizational communication. According to what was reported, it was possible to verify that most of the interviewees commonly consider organizational communication as a synonym for internal communication, which is a mistake, given that organizational communication is much broader. In addition to internal communication, organizational communication encompasses institutional communication, marketing communication and administrative communication, which together form a mix called integrated organizational communication (KUNSCH, 2003).

Regarding the interpretation above, one of the interviewees replied that: "Well, organizational communication is the type of communication that is made between the

department and the courses, as well as between the employees who work in our department" (I1).

Furthermore, there were two reports that showed greater proximity to the concepts of organizational communication addressed in the literature, as they comprehended the internal public of the institution and the external public, referred to as strategic audience or opinion legitimizers. One of them replied: "I understand that organizational communication is all the available forms that the institution offers so that there is an effective internal and external communication (I8)".

Regarding the evaluation of communication at DFCH, 3 people considered it good and satisfactory. One of the interviewees reported: "In general, I believe that the DFCH has good communication with teachers, with students, with the community, since there is a department website in which information is available on this website and also on the website of the university. We manage these pages by placing the information and we are always ready to assist people, students, teachers ... whoever comes to ask for information. However, the media can present problems, so, even before information is released or corrected; another media already advances the appropriate information (I2)".

Communication at DFCH was also considered rather formal, as it is limited to the integrated management systems (SIPAC, SIGRH and SIGAA). An interviewee pointed out that: "It is very formal, restricted to the systems that the university uses (I4)".

Another point that should be highlighted in the interview is that the communication at DFCH was considered "regular". One of the interviewees says: "It is quite regular, because there are situations that we only learn about in the corridors informally, so there are some other resources in the department (I5).

The civil servants were asked about the impact of technology on communication. They were unanimous in their responses, as everyone agrees that communication has been affected by technology. One of the interviewees reported: "Yes, with technological advances, communication tends to become faster, less formal and more accessible (I4).

A further relevant factor perceived is that the impact of technology on the communicational process in the institution has been recognized as beneficial, for the data reveals that the technology streamlines the communication process: Thus, one of the interviewees reported: "Yes, it has been positively affected, hasn't it? They came to further optimize, to shorten the response time, and technology does positively interfere in the way people communicates (I8)".

The interviewees' perceptions reflect what Castells (2003) in recent years has named as "network society", precisely because of the impact of technology and the increasingly

presence of the internet in almost every aspect of people's lives, enabling a new format in the way individuals do communicate in society.

Civil society is being profoundly altered by the advent of this new network architecture, which significantly affects "politics, the economy, culture, education and all social fields, even how we organize ourselves and live our lives" (LEMOS; DI FELICE, 2015, p. 2).

It was also sought in this study to identify the communication tools used at DFCH. According to reports, the most used communication tools currently in the department are the Integrated Management Systems (SIPAC, SIGRH, and SIGAA), e-mail and the institutional website. Regarding management information systems, one of the respondents stated: "Well, the communication that is used today is the Management Information System - MIS, so the protocol issue is through the electronic memo" (I1).

Regarding the institutional website and e-mail, the following response was obtained: "Currently we use e-mail a lot, each one has his personal e-mail, the department's e-mail, we have the department's website also, so there is a lot that is posted there for students, we have a WhatsApp group for communication" (I3). "Institutional e-mail, departmental and coordination sites are also used" (I4).

WhatsApp and mobile phones were also mentioned as tools used in the DFCH communication, mainly for the ease of access, speed and practicality that these means provide. About this factor, the following account is presented:

"We generally use social media, I believe way more today than before, WhatsApp, and especially also the phone, although we have used it fewer times, we utilise SIPAC a lot through memo, as many sectors require us to formalize orders, formalize requests and do not stop at verbal communication, so we have used these three vehicles: WhatsApp, the telephone and UNIFAP's own administrative system" (I9).

Thus, with regards to the use of digital communication tools, a similar result was found in Moreno (2018), when it was revealed that SIPAC and e-mail were considered frequent communication channels by the unit researched from a federal university. However, the institutional website was not considered as a communication channel and is rarely used, which differs in this aspect to the result presented by the present research at DFCH.

As for WhatsApp, studies by Carvalho (2015) reveal that this social media is considered a widely used internal communication tool, and can be an instrument to leverage dialogue, reduce misunderstandings or rumours and build more solid

relationships with the team, thus contributing to the organization results. According to Honorato and Reis (2014) it is possible to see WhatsApp as a multiplatform application that allows you to exchange files on your cell phone, with the primary objective of streamline processes and bringing people together. However, as in any communication channel, there may be different levels of noise; hence, regardless of the platform, attention is needed when sharing institutional information.

Similarly, it is up to the organization and its employees to establish a minimum awareness of boundaries for media usage and exposure. There should be an orientation on the limits regarding the staff conduct specifically on the issue of entertainment versus work usage of media. It is necessary to create a policy to guide the appropriate use of communication tools in institutions.

In short, Corrêa (2009) explains that in the organizational context, the digital reality is inherent to the institution's very functioning. Regardless of its field of activity, the computer is indispensable, the integrated management systems, the pages and the corporate portals on the web and intranets are currently means of operation and connection, the usual expression of an organization with its different audiences.

Questions 6, 7 and 8 of the script endeavoured to extract information about social media usage in the DFCH, as well as their role in the communication process and their position in relation to the other communication channels in the organization.

Based on question 6 reports, it was noticed that WhatsApp and the institutional website were mentioned by all respondents; which implies that these tools are considered as the most used social media in DFCH. For that reason, the following response was obtained from a server: "Well, the only social media really used is WhatsApp, we have a plethora of social media ... Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and so forth ..., but it's it is all about WhatsApp, so much so that it is the most used social network, whenever institutional vehicles present a problem, WhatsApp helps" (I1).

Another response given was: "Currently, I only see the sites that the course coordinators as well as the department itself use; I think it is the only social media that I see being used" (I4). In addition to WhatsApp and the institutional portal, interviewees mentioned the use of e-mail, Facebook and phone, the latter being very little used at DFCH. One of the interviewees quoted: "Look, we use e-mail as well as WhatsApp, right? Sometimes even Facebook when it comes to a broader need, right, as is the case with the community, the university page itself. We do have our university page that has all the information for the academic community, don't we?" (I7).

According to Kunsch (2016), organizations suffer all the impacts of the transformations that happen in society. Therefore, the way of doing communication has changed radically, mainly with the insertion of new social media. Such media further promote the process of building meaning in relationships, also known as interactions. They are tools that make projection conditions feasible, requiring new dynamics from organizations without replacing the value of human beings, as they must be able to learn and relearn due to the emergence of new technologies.

It is important to highlight that the terms "Social Media" and "Social Network" are quite often used interchangeably. However, social networks are a category of social media. According to Telles (2010, p. 19), the definition of social media is much more comprehensive, "they are sites on the internet built to allow the collaborative creation of content, social interaction and the sharing of information in various formats".

Kaplan and Haenlein define them as "a group of internet applications based on the ideological foundations of Web 2.0, which allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (KAPLAN; HAENLEIN, 2010, p. 61).

Social media provide the construction of valuable relationships, implying in a series of interpretation conditions of what organizational life will be; however, people are not prevented from looking into the digital issue, the relational issue (MARCHIORI, 2010).

In short, it is important to highlight that the use of technologies that make the communication process viable, especially social media and social networks, does not even keep internal communication restricted to the physical environment of organizations, it also happens in the external environment of the university .

Question 7 addressed the role of social media in the communication process under the perception of DFCH's technical and administrative staff. According to the data obtained, it was found that the respondents were unanimous when they recognized that social media is important for the communication process. Moreover, they pointed out that the speed in the exchange of information is a positive factor of these tools, as the following report corroborates: "It is very important for the speed and ease of communication" (I3).

Besides the recognized importance attributed to social media in the organizational communication process and the positive factors abovementioned, it was also noticed that the participants pointed out some precautions that must be taken when using these platforms.

Question 8 endeavoured to extract information, from the interviewees' perception, on how other communication channels are being taken into account after the emergence

of social media. In this sense, the research shows that social media came to add to the existing means of communication, because, under the perception of most respondents, these means have not become obsolete.

In "Culture of Convergence", Jenkins (2015) explains that this scenario is not only a technological transformation, but also a cultural transformation, as it affects the way people interact with those platforms. The author points out that the new and traditional media are converging, mixing and in a constant process of feedback, the "traditional media are passive, current media is participatory and interactive, they coexist and are on a collision course" (JENKINS, 2015, p.1).

The ninth and final question refers to the presentation of suggestions, criticisms or comments from the research participants aiming at improving communication at the DFCH. The following report demonstrates that it is necessary for the department's employees to use the available communication tools, in order to improve this process:

"Well, the DFCH does not fully use the tools it should be using, we do not know if this is due to the shortage of technicians or their insufficient training, but it would be very interesting to improve the communication issue, wouldn't it? So I think there is a lot to evolve, the tools already exist, right? Now we really need to use them (I1)."

Participants also suggested using the tools available on Google Drive. Moreover, the use of social media – Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram – aiming at strengthening the relations between the course coordinators linked to the DFCH.

The creation of a working group and an academic secretariat to think and plan communication in the DFCH was also suggestions raised by the research, as it could lead to considerable improvements in communication; as it is evidenced in the following account: "I believe that using other resources besides SIPAC, right? It is ... maybe DFCH social media, more institutional, which is what we don't have today. Instead of using my personal instrument, create a working group to think about communication, as we did to think about the department's academic secretary. The academic secretariat would be an improvement for communication" (E5).

The academic secretariat's proposal consists of the departure of the technical-administrative staff from the course centres and they would be concentrated in the physical space of the DFCH executing only the administrative demands, whilst the pedagogical demands would be under the responsibility of the course administrators.

Adjustments to the integrated systems (SIPAC, SIGRH and SIGAA) were also suggestions made by the interviewees, since they understand that these systems must

address some general demands according to the sector's profile, as access to information is still very limited and the interviewees do not have full access to the system. One of the interviewees has thus explained the situation:

"I think I have already mentioned that, but I think it is necessary that the system that we are officially using further adjusts itself to the reality of that place and that unit to meet their needs. Sometimes we want to get information, but we do not have full access, often information is limited, right?" (17).

Furthermore, the research revealed that the information pages of some undergraduate courses linked to the DFCH are outdated.

The response delays to electronic documents in the integrated systems and through e-mails were also mentioned by the interviewees. The suggestion made is that there should be a kind of notification on the cell phone so that the employees were promptly alerted about the documents pending responses.

Some of the interviewees agreed that communication at DFCH has advanced considerably in recent years, since social media has made work more dynamic. Furthermore, the data pointed out that the detachment amongst people in the workplace is being caused by the systematization of institutional processes.

One of the interviewees pointed out: "Improve communication? An ... I believe that we have moved forward, despite the fact that social media makes work more dynamic and faster, in that sense we have moved forward a lot ... I believe that the only suggestion I could make here is to make this exchange of communications and the very organization environment more lively and less systematized. Today, we are experiencing a moment of systematization and informatization that is very big here and as a consequence of that we face the detachment of people" (19).

Thus, it should be noted that the research shows divergent perceptions regarding the modern communication platforms implemented in the organization. At the same time that the interviewees point out a diversity of benefits brought by these media (ease of access, speed in the exchange of information, shortening distances, amongst others), 19 draws attention to the human issue and highlights the widening of distance that these tools generate between people.

Finally, aiming at a better understanding of the data exposed so far, it was possible to build a synthesis with the suggestions, criticisms and comments presented by the interviewees, as shown on Table 1.

Table 1 Summary of the interviewees' suggestions, criticisms and comments

Answers presented by the interviewees	
1	Use the tools already available in the department.
2	Utilize Google Drive Tools.
3	Strengthen the communication between the academic administrators linked to DFC by using social media – Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
4	Create a working group to discuss and plan communication in the department.
5	Develop the academic secretariat.
6	Make adjustments to the integrated management systems (SIPAC, SIGRH, and SIGAA).
7	Update the pages of the DFCH undergraduate courses (websites, fan page).
8	Set up an email or cell phone notification for the staff, aiming at alerting them of documents pending in the integrated systems.
9	Develop an integration plan aiming to ease the distance between technical and administrative staff caused by digital platforms.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In order to implement the recommendations abovementioned, it is suggested the creation of working groups linked to the Dean Special Advisory Board (Assessoria special da Reitoria –AER), to discuss and plan the internal communication of DFCH/UNIFAP.

Final considerations

The current article sought to analyse how the communication process through social media occurs in the Academic Department of Philosophy and Human Sciences at UNIFAP. Its main objective was achieved, as it was possible to conclude that communication in the DFCH occurs formally through the integrated management systems (SIPAC, SIGRH and SIGAA), e-mail and the institutional website and, informally, through WhatsApp as support for the formal means mentioned.

The study presents relevant issues that are part of the daily lives of universities such as communication in the organizational context as well as the use of the internet and social media in this process. The opportunity to analyse such factors is aimed at detecting flaws as well as opening possibilities for improvement proposals to the institution's communication process.

There were two main research limitations: a) the lack of specialised bibliography on social media in the public sector, as it is a relatively recent issue in the organizational sphere; and b) the restricted universe of the study – only one academic department, with a universe of 10 participants.

Thus, the possibility of future researches using a quantitative approach is rather possible and desirable, as it can encompass other units of the university, aiming at having

a general panorama on the subject and, in the future, raising a comparison between UNIFAP and other federal universities in the country.

In short, the article aimed at contributing to the improvement of communication at DFCH/UNIFAP, creating communication strategies that may be utilized by other university units, and transforming the organizational environment into a space in which communication can also flow seamlessly through digital platforms.

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RESUMO:

O advento da internet viabilizou mudanças na forma das pessoas se comunicarem. Objetiva-se, nesta pesquisa, analisar o processo de comunicação organizacional, por meio das mídias sociais no Departamento Acadêmico de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas – DFCH, da Universidade Federal do Amapá. Metodologicamente, trata-se de abordagem qualitativa, descritiva, configurada como estudo de caso. Os dados foram coletados por meio de entrevista semiestruturada, com participação de 10 técnicos-administrativos. Os resultados revelam que a comunicação no DFCH ocorre por sistemas integrados de gestão (SIPAC, SIGRH e SIGAA), por e-mail e site institucional e, informalmente, por WhatsApp. Apresenta-se, como proposta, a criação de grupos vinculados à Assessoria Especial da Reitoria (AER), para o processo comunicacional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Comunicação Organizacional; Internet; Mídias Sociais.

RESUMEN:

La llegada de internet ha permitido cambios en la forma en que las personas se comunican. El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar el proceso de comunicación organizacional, a través de las redes sociales, en el Departamento Académico de Filosofía y Ciencias Humanas - DFCH, en la Universidad Federal de Amapá. Metodológicamente, es un enfoque cualitativo, descriptivo, configurado como un estudio de caso. Los datos fueron recolectados a través de entrevistas semiestructuradas, con la participación de 10 técnicos administrativos. Los resultados revelan que la comunicación en el DFCH se produce a través de sistemas de gestión integrados (SIPAC, SIGRH y SIGAA), por correo electrónico y sitio web institucional y, de manera informal, por WhatsApp. Se propone la creación de grupos vinculados a la Asesoría Especial de la Rectoría (AER), para el proceso de comunicación.

PALABRAS-CLAVES: Comunicación Organizacional; Internet; Medios Sociales.