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# GENERATIONS, DIGITAL USES AND COMPETENCES: TRENDS AND GAPS IN THE RESEARCH

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Historically, media were mostly considered as a means of reinforcement of the generational gap, commonly in a family context. However, the intergenerational gap has been diminishing over time (Bolin and Skogerbø, 2013), and the digital era is contributing to bridge the generational divide. Antonija Čuvalo and Zrinjka Peruško (2017) discern media repertoires shared among the youngest (the so-called digital generation or digital natives), and the older generation of digital immigrants. In this sense, there is a need to work closely on life course perspectives as a possible explanation of the weakening or perpetuating of the generational gap (Amaral and Daniel, 2018). The context of digital literacy has reinforced activities by civil society and schools, and can shed some light on the discussion of this need (Brites, 2017). Furthermore, a generational perspective in family and school environments can empower this discussion. In this special issue, we aim to discuss some of the above-mentioned considerations. We ponder the view that the field is currently driven by three trends and also by some persistent gaps that need to be addressed.

The first trend is related to *isolations and media generations*. The concept of 'generation' seems promising for an explanation of economic, social, political and cultural changes. Although original Karl Mannheim's social theory of generations from the late 1920s was concerned with the political dimension as the most relevant for explaining different generational identities, today's media affordances, forms and uses could be more important even for the way young people relate to politics (Corsten, 1999; Edmunds and Turner, 2005).

The rapid development and spread of media and communication technologies that have been occurring since the 1980s – and especially from the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century due to the rise of social media - have aroused interest for generational differences in media use among media and communication scholars. The focus has been on the role of youth in domestication, shaping and construction of digital media and on the effects of the 'new media' on the young people's culture(s) and minds (Palfrey and Gasser, 2008; Prensky, 2001; Tapscott, 1998). The main narrative has referred to the unique 'global digital generation' (Aroldi and Colombo, 2013; Edmunds and Turner, 2005) born with the proliferation of the Internet and mobile media. Piermarco Aroldi and Fausto Colombo (2013, see also Bennet *et al.*, 2008) criticize monolithic, historically and geographically decontextualized dominant narrative, pointing to the complexities of the definition of generations and the role of "inter-generational interaction in shaping of collective identities" (2013: 175). The dominant narrative on 'digital generation'" (Internet generation, digital natives, Generation Y, Millennials) usually deals with the pure fact that a certain cohort was born together with the rise of digital and mobile media as a sufficient condition for disruptive, unique and unambiguous generational effects of these technologies (Bolton *et al.*, 2013).

Such a linear narrative often neglects (i) diverse geographies with their histories, different media landscapes and the way in which these differences constitute specific cultural identities (Edmunds and Turner, 2005); (ii) different socio-economic positions; (iii) intergenerational continuities and practices (of previous generations) which make possible and are integrated in new ones; (iv) generation and also intergenerational dynamics as

an active force in shaping media and communication technologies. Furthermore, Göran Bolin and Oscar Westlund (2009) point out that technology does not only make distinctive generations, but that technology per se also determines the ways of its use. Their basic argument is that those who "have grown up with different mediated experiences during their formative years will relate to the mobile technology in a variety of ways" (Bolin and Westlund, 2009: 108).

The second trend is *the digital and the will of media nostalgia*. Media experiences can shape the social construction of a 'generational identity' that stems from media and digital media appropriations. 'Generational contexts' and 'generational identities' flow in unmediated media experiences, in a logic of individualizing communication (Amaral and Brites, 2019). Considering the hybridity that characterizes the current media ecosystem, the consumptions are not necessarily generational but rather intergenerational (Amaral and Brites, 2019).

In the context of media experiences, several generations intersect with the notion of 'memory'. Kerwin Lee Klein argues that "memory can come to the fore in an age of historiographic crisis precisely because it figures as a therapeutic alternative to historical discourse" (2000: 145). There are expressions of nostalgia in aesthetics, lifestyles, objects and media content (Niemeyer, 2014). In fact, "nostalgia is not only a fashion or a trend. Rather, it very often expresses or hints at something more profound, as it deals with positive or negative relations to time and space. It is related to a way of living, imagining and sometimes exploiting or (re)inventing the past, present and future" (Niemeyer, 2014: 2).

Media may disrupt memory (Nora, 1972), which leads to a reinvention of history through a crisis of representation, promoting what Jameson describes as 'historical amnesia' (1998: 20). Therefore, "nostalgia is related to the concept of memory, since it recalls times and places that [there] are no more, or are out of reach" (Niemeyer, 2014: 5).

The emergence of nostalgia implies a crisis of temporality (Niemeyer, 2014). The nostalgia wave can indicate two social phenomena: a resistance to fast technologies despite their use and the creation of a wanderlust state as an escape from reality (Niemeyer, 2014).

Concerning media generations, Ryan Lizardi (2017) claims that there are transgenerational audiences. Furthermore, media industries "create a surrogate nostalgic identity for younger generations by continually feeding them the content of their elders" (Lizardi, 2017: 1). Madison Magladry sustains that "mainstream nostalgia is invested in intertwining individual and group identities together, effectively guiding subjects to conflate their personal identities with their own specific cultural and social contexts, and vice versa" (2016: 269).

The media obsession with nostalgia (Hutcheon, 1998) encourages the dominant trend of reproducing the old as good (Lizardi, 2014). Commercial nostalgic representations are static and uncritical (Lizardi, 2014; Magladry, 2016) arising from a 'retrotopia' (Bauman,

2017). The media, as retro industries, are producers and mediators of the past (Kay *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, "the increasing trend is to make rehashed texts and characters consistently available and appealing to all generations in an attempt to ensure their perpetual cultural relevance" (Lizardi, 2017: 1).

'Mass-mediated nostalgia' (Menke, 2017) is a created mediatic landscape that shows a past that does not refer to historical time but to "media creations, personalities, and allusions" (Davis, 1979: 125). Manuel Menke (2017) distinguishes 'mediated nostalgia' from 'media nostalgia'. The first term refers to the media as mediators of past experiences. Media nostalgia refers to the fact that "media culture, technology, or content are at the centre of the nostalgic longing" (Menke, 2017: 630).

In the age of 'social acceleration' (Niemeyer, 2014) through technology, nostalgia arises in apparent contradiction as its opposite as retro-cultures contradict the traditional obsolescence of digital devices and gadgets. The trend of 'retromania' (Reynolds, 2011) exploits individual and collective nostalgias, continuing marketing that uses the perspective of the past as idyllic or as a break with current fast-forward consumption. The commoditization of nostalgia (Grainge, 2000) relies on the use of terms such as 'vintage' and 'retro' to delimit the return of products, fashions and trends of the past, a process that is easily recognizable in the market packed with nostalgia of discourse (Castellano and Meimaridis, 2017). There are many examples of media nostalgia from television series to retro-gaming, or analogic photography to online communities that share media experiences from their childhood (Menke, 2017).

Thirdly, we point to *the revitalisation of the emergence of media literacy*. The study of generations with respect to digital uses and competences is relatively recent, compared with the broader field of generations and media. Even so, one could say that this is a very active and specific field of study. It can be said that this is a trend nowadays.

At present, working with teenagers and older students is one of the main fields of research all over Europe (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2016). One of the major developments regarding generations and media literacy is the connection between children and/or youth and digital competences. This can be related to different descriptions, terms and implications, such as 'digital skills', '21<sup>st</sup> century learning and skills', 'digital natives', 'digital generation', 'net generation' (Erstad, 2015; Jenson and Droumeva, 2017; Kopic, 2018; Prensky, 2001; Tapscott, 1998, 2009). At the same time, there is often an interrelation of media, and particularly of new media, with civic topics (Kim and Yang, 2016). A recent sub-trend in research refers to dealing with specific platforms and young people, such as *YouTube* experiences, and also young children and touchscreens. The 'latest new technology' has always provided dynamic research. The main difference nowadays is that technology is ever-changing, which also means that the theoretical conception on literacies, technologies and skills needs to gain another strength in research.

Recently, intergenerational research has expanded, mostly into two inter-directions: very young children/young people and parents and, at the same time, very young

children/young people and elders/grandparents. These intergenerational groups are visible throughout civil society projects (such as *AGE-Platform Europe*, 2019; *Hive NYC Learning Network*, 2019; *Media Literacy Council*, 2019) and in research and theoretical approaches (Livingstone *et al.*, 2015; Mascheroni *et al.*, 2016; Meimaris, 2017; Marsh *et al.*, 2018). Within these approaches, game activities also constitute a relevant narrative of research (Ouellet *et al.*, 2017).

Media literacy is often pondered as a channel to bridge the intergenerational digital divide (Meimaris, 2017). Intergenerational perspectives also include research in the context of family-driven appreciations. In this regard, and following a tradition that has its roots in television (Aroldi, 2004), there is an intergenerational/family context-based perspective, as an interface that gives rise to preoccupations in the context of family.

There is also an agenda on the relationship between teachers/students. In this regard, adults are often reflected in the role of being parents, as we have already identified, and also as being teachers: from the perspective of creating the conditions for teachers to understand students (Saul, 2016), to the perspective of being responsible for teaching under the umbrella of media literacy (Fernández-Cruz and Fernández-Díaz, 2016; García-Ruiz *et al.*, 2016; Scheibe, 2009), in an interactive form (Hobbs, 2011), as well as in terms of challenging teachers' authority (Pfaff-Rüdiger and Riesmeyer, 2016).

Another increasing line of work is the look at digital literacy and inclusion of digital immigrants. When referring to older people, we can see that there is a reinforcing of the idea of inclusion and digital literacy, and also of active ageing (Abad Alcalá, 2014; Loureiro and Barbas, 2014; Schäffer, 2007). Perhaps with low commercial interest, this age group is now receiving more attention (Amaral and Daniel, 2018). Yet, it was not always like that (Schäffer, 2007), in spite of all the difficulties regarding the skills to use digital media.

These research contexts lead us also to identify the gaps that could be addressed in a research agenda for the near future. Theoretical research and comparative research (for example, within the framework of media systems) are among the missing gaps identified. During the radio and television times, research considered adults as adults (further than acting as parents or teachers). In a sense, geography can have considerable relevance for neglected memories: missing histories and neglected geographies, such as, in the case of Balkan, African and Asian media generations, differences and shared identities across the region, post-socialist countries, postcolonial trajectories, to name a few.

Concerning audiences and media and digital competencies, the media industries also get less attention, *e.g.*, the topic of the industry of retro-culture, its audiences and media nostalgia, in relation to, for example, the rise and normalization of populism. Generational and intergenerational research on journalist practices, newsrooms and media organizations are also of decisive relevance (Brites and Pinto, 2017). Nevertheless, these topics are not often covered by research.

The aim of this special issue is to focus on some of these discussions and trends and also on some of the gaps that were identified. This special issue opens with an article by Daniel Calderón Gómez who attempts to reconstruct, by means of a Bourdieuan approach, young people's biographies of socialization in the use of ICTs in the area of Madrid. By using a robust sample of thirty in-depth interviews (structured by gender, age, education and type of digital accessibility), the author presents a typology of four techno-biographical trajectories: 'pro-technology users', 'practical users', 'mobile users' and 'professional users'. Sebastian Ivasović and Ivan Burić identify motives, patterns and frequency of smartphone uses in the context of face-to-face interaction among Generation Z which is defined as a cohort of those born in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Their study combines qualitative and quantitative data with a view to exploring how young people deal with the "fear of missing out" (FOMO), which is correlated with the need for constant connection. Patrícia Gil analyses the results of a qualitative study in a multi-platform writing training for Journalism students. The research focuses on the understanding and appropriation of professional journalistic practices by Generation Z, people who have experienced the context of media convergence and narrative hybridization since birth. The results show that Generation Z has greater flexibility in decision making and is more oriented towards a multi-platform production that reaches an audience scattered across many channels.

The article by Christiane Monteiro Machado and Jorge Pedro Sousa analyses stereotyped portrayals of older people in Brazilian advertising from a sample of advertising posts published on *Facebook* and *YouTube*. They show positive and negative stereotypes related to elders. While positive stereotyping correlates age with long-life experiences, negative stereotypes are more nuanced and imply difficulties with technology, a lost sense of reality, physical impairments and an old fashioned style.

Rebekka Haubold prepared a theoretical discussion that covers ageism through the fixation of age in German media pedagogy research and practice. The author also discusses the implications of fostering media pedagogical research and practice on target age groups. She considers the provision of impulses for rethinking and reflecting on the dominant focus on age in media pedagogy and at the same time presents a view of neglected contexts beneath age.

Dina Vozab's article aims to test the effects of socioeconomic status and generational effect on the formation of different news media repertoires in Croatia. Furthermore, the interplay between the socio-demographic factors and political interest in the formation of generational news media repertoires is discussed. The results are based on the Latent Class Analysis carried out on the Croatian sample from *Reuters 2018 Digital News Survey*. The article by Delali Dovie and colleagues studies digital literacy among different generations in Ghana. The authors present a framework of digital literacy in the country, taking into account socioeconomic specificities. A survey of individuals aged 18-59 years and 60+ years, supplemented with qualitative interviews, reveals a digital divide between generations, reduced intergenerational use of social media platforms, and a high generational gap in digital literacy.

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**GENERACIJE,**

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**DIGITALNA UPOTREBA**

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**I KOMPETENCIJE**

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*GENERATIONS,*

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*DIGITAL USES*

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*AND COMPETENCES*

# UNDERSTANDING TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIALIZATION. A SOCIO-GENERATIONAL STUDY OF YOUNG ADULTS' TECHNO-BIOGRAPHICAL TRAJECTORIES IN THE REGION OF MADRID

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Daniel Calderón Gómez

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**ABSTRACT** *In this article the author takes a socio-generational perspective in order to reconstruct young adults' biographies of socialization in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the region of Madrid, presenting a Bourdieuan approach which includes two entangled dimensions of this process: material domestication of ICTs in daily activity and distinctive digital literacies internalized as dispositions towards practice. From a sample of thirty in-depth interviews structured by gender, age, education and type of digital accessibility, the author's analysis results in a typology of four ideal techno-biographical trajectories ('T1-pro-technology users', 'T2-practical users', 'T3-mobile users', 'T4-professional users') which represent distinctive forms of appropriation of digital technologies into practice.*

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## KEYWORDS

YOUTH, INTERNET, DIGITAL DIVIDE, DIGITAL NATIVES, GENERATIONAL ANALYSIS

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## INTRODUCTION. GENERATIONAL RESEARCH ON DIGITAL NATIVES

During the last two decades, the association between technological innovation in the context of the emergence of information society and younger generations has been widely promoted – inside the academia, but also as a form of generational marketing among digital and cyber-cultural industries (Montgomery, 2009). The entanglement between technology and youth is not new, but in the information age, it results in a quite ambivalent conceptualization. (1) On the one hand, young people's capacity of agency in neoliberal informational capitalism and intuitive affinity with the emergent cyber-culture is glorified, thus giving rise to the emergence of concepts such as 'net generation' (Tapscott, 1998) or 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001). A huge cultural difference is remarked between digital immigrants, who were socialized in the use of analogical technologies, and digital natives, who "are all native speakers of the digital language" (Prensky, 2001: 1) because of their early socialization with computers and the Internet. Although Marc Prensky did not clarify the exact chronological cleavage between these two age groups, in the USA, it is generally proposed that the time point in question can be traced back to the early 80s (Palfrey and Gasser, 2011; Kirschner and De Bruyckere, 2017), whilst in Europe this cut-point is sometimes delayed to the early 90s (Erstad, 2011). (2) On the other hand, this capacity of agency is denied when social discourses highlight the risks and drawbacks of information society, which also seem to particularly affect younger generations. In point of fact, 'addiction to technology' (Ryding and Kaye, 2018), 'cyberbullying' (Kowalski *et al.*, 2012), 'exposition to inappropriate content', 'insecurity or lack of privacy' (Blank *et al.*, 2014) are some of the problematic issues that allegedly affect youngsters the most. The confluence of these two trends results in an ideological narrative that, paradoxically, represents youth simultaneously as an omnipotent subject naturally able to get along in the changing digital environment and as a passive victim exposed to all of the risks and dangers of the information society.

In spite of the popularity of the digital youth model, many critical approaches have remarked its technological determinism (Buckingham, 2011; Thomas, 2011), criticized its lack of empirical evidence to support such daring assumptions about young affinity with ICTs (Bennet *et al.*, 2008; Kirschner and De Bruyckere, 2017) and highlighted its ideological affinity with the neoliberal vision of autocratic and autonomous individuals (Selwyn, 2009). Moreover, digital divide studies have gathered strong evidence in the last decades about the deepening digital inequalities (Van Dijk, 2005) inherently associated with the diversification and transformation of society's technological landscape in the last decades. Thus, the earliest digital divide approaches were concerned with material access to digital devices (Compaine, 2001; DiMaggio and Hargittai, 2001), whilst the following approaches have focused on the inequalities linked to digital use – the second digital divide (Hargittai, 2002; Van Deursen and Van Dijk, 2013), highlighting the importance of quality of access (Robinson, 2009), digital skills (Hargittai and Shaw, 2015) and motivational factors (Reisdorf and Groseelj, 2017) in understanding the specific practices associated with digital technologies. This is particularly significant in the case of youngsters, since digital divide studies have served to empirically dismantle the universal affinity and proficiency of this

collective towards digital media. Therefore, it has become possible to analyze the influence of socio-structural factors – such as social class, gender, cultural capital or ethnicity – in a variety of young digital practices (Robinson, 2009; Boonaert and Vettenburg, 2011; Correa, 2016; Thornham and Gómez Cruz, 2016), as well as the importance of developing digital competencies in order to improve life chances – the third digital divide, related to the social benefits and outcomes of digital practices (Ragnedda, 2017).

In the last few years, some research projects have been trying to recover the importance of the generational dimension in the analysis of digital practices without falling into the reductionism and universalization of the digital natives' model. At least three relevant trends can be identified: (i) studies of inter-generational uses of the Internet and ICTs, showing how youngsters can help older people to acquire digital competencies and interest in using technological devices, but also how older family members provide a technological environment to younger generations and pass on certain dispositions and attitudes towards technology (Correa, 2015; Lüders and Brandtzæg, 2017); (ii) the focus on the specific digital practices of adult and older generations, taking into account that Internet accessibility and digital technologies have become widely popular among population in the last years (Friemel, 2014; Van Deursen and Helsper, 2015; Schreurs *et al.*, 2017), and, finally, (iii) biographical analysis (Bolin, 2018; Taipale *et al.*, 2018), focusing on technological socialization processes and techno-biographical trajectories; that is, reconstructing subjects' distinctive digital practices during their life stages in particular socio-historical moments in which certain technologies are available. This last trend is the one that will be developed in this paper. Therefore, in the next section, the author presents the main theoretical tools that are used with the aim of understanding young adults' socialization in the use of technology.

## UNDERSTANDING TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIALIZATION: DOMESTICATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL LITERACY

In order to reconstruct people's techno-biographical trajectories, it is needed to understand how they are socialized in the use of digital technologies. My approximation to technological socialization (Merino Malillos, 2010; Calderón Gómez, 2018) is based on the Bourdieuan notion of 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1979), which is simultaneously internalized in dispositions and externalized in social positions taken by subjects during their daily activity. Therefore, two intertwined sides of the same process, which is technological socialization, need to be considered: the material appropriation of technological devices – domestication of technology (Silverstone, 1993), and the phenomenological internalization of dispositions towards technology – digital literacy (Erstad, 2011).

In the first place, material accessibility to digital technologies is conditioned by the distinction between affordances and appropriations (Schäfer, 2011). Broadly, the term 'affordance', taken from James J. Gibson's theory of perception (1979), refers to the actionable properties and potentialities inscribed in digital media and devices by design (weight, size, operative system, connectivity, possible uses, *etc.*), whilst 'appropriation'

refers to the actual ways in which subjects incorporate such media and devices into their social practices. There is never a whole convergence of affordances and appropriations, since users might not take all the potentialities of a certain technological object – because of lack of awareness, competency or interest – and they could also deploy digital practices opposed to the conventions promoted by designers. Furthermore, the term ‘domestication’ (Silverstone, 1993) refers to the continuous process of appropriation of digital media that is developed by subjects during their lives, taking into account the variety of devices and forms of use developed in different life stages and social spaces in which subjects participate, such as school, university, work, leisure, social interaction, etc. Summing up, in order to reconstruct people’s techno-biographies, the following dimensions need to be considered:

- a) *Type of devices* used at different life stages, focusing particularly on the comparison between mobile phones and personal computers (see the Methodology chapter);
- b) *Precocity and intensity of use* of different devices, since incorporating them during early stages of life can shape digital experiences afterwards, motivating people to acquire more digital competencies and engender particular generational identities (Taipale *et al.*, 2018);
- c) *Forms of appropriation* of devices, which are in the base of the internalization of specific dispositions towards technology, engendering distinctive forms of digital literacy, as it is developed in the following paragraph.

In the second place, the acquisition of competencies and skills in the use of ICTs has led to the study of distinctive forms of digital literacy (Livingstone, 2008; Erstad, 2011; Jones, 2011) experienced by subjects. The term ‘digital skills’ was promoted by the authors like Eszter Hargittai (2002) or Alexander J. A. M. Van Deursen and Jan A. G. M. Van Dijk (2014) in order to analyze digital inequalities beyond material access. However, due to the sociological approach adopted, I prefer the term ‘disposition’ – in the Lahirian sense (Lahire, 2013), adapted to a post-Fordist unfixed society in which multiple socialization experiences coexist. Dispositions include competencies and digital skills, but also schemes for action, expectations, interests, motivations and previous experiences in the use of digital technologies which shape the distinctive way in which different types of users incorporate them into their practice. Therefore, digital capacitation is mainly unconscious, unintentionally internalized during daily digital practices, but it is also important to analyze both formal and social contexts – such as school, work or social interaction – in which subjects are encouraged to increase their level of digital skills in order to fulfill certain tasks. This is why, in order to categorize subjects’ techno-biographies, the following dimensions related to their particular digital literacy itineraries will be considered:

- (a) *Self-perceived level of digital competencies* in order to fulfill subject’s particular necessities of using ICTs,
- (b) *Motivation*, which can be split between *unconscious self-capacitation*, produced unintentionally during daily activities, and *conscious self-capacitation*, which is related to the motivated necessity of acquiring certain digital skills,

(c) *Formality*, which refers to the level of structuration of digital literacies. They can be split between the *informal form of literacy*, when competencies are just acquired during the use of digital devices, and the *formal form of literacy*, when digital skills that subjects acquired are clearly structured – like in specific courses, at school, at university or at work;

(d) *Sociality*, since most digital practices are not developed individually but in a social space of interaction. We can differentiate between *social practices*, which refer to digital activities developed in group – even if physical presence is not needed because of ICTs' affordances – and *social support*, which refers to the cases in which someone helps another one (or is helped by them) in order to fulfill a certain task. In this case, the role of donor (digital mediator) can be distinguished from the role of receptor (proxy user) of help.

## METHODOLOGY

In this paper, a qualitative methodology based on thirty in-depth interviews conducted with youngsters and young adults in the region of Madrid, Spain, is used. Data collection was completed in 2017 and 2018. The author's aim was to represent different districts of the city of Madrid and municipalities in its metropolitan area. Particularly, focus was placed on subjects born between 1982 and 1999 that use the Internet frequently in their daily life and who generationally belong to the contested category of the so-called digital natives, with the objective of understanding their digital asymmetries in terms of offline benefits (Ragnedda, 2017). The qualitative discourse analysis is based on the socio-hermeneutic approach developed by Alonso (1998), with a view to placing persons' narratives in their social context or production and reproduction, focusing on the pragmatic dimension of language. Also, a socio-biographical dimension has been adopted (Wengraf, 2001) in order to understand youngsters' distinctive itineraries of technological socialization, integrated by the material dimension of incorporating digital devices into particular activities during life (domestication) and the phenomenological internalization of competencies and dispositions (digital literacy). In addition, a qualitative structural sample design (Valles, 2014) based on the typological and theoretical representation of four relevant sociological variables was used. The foregoing is presented in Table 1 and discussed below.

Table 1. Qualitative sample. Main characteristics of respondents.

ID	City (district)*	Gender	Generation (birthdate)	Educational level	Type of Access
R1	Rivas	Woman	Mobile Dig. Natives (1996)	Secondary	Multiple
R2	Rivas	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Secondary	Simple
R3	San Fernando	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Secondary	Multiple
R4	Rivas	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1988)	Higher	Simple
R5	Torrejón de Ardoz	Man	Mobile Dig. Natives (1995)	Secondary	Advanced
R6	Madrid (Centro)	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1988)	Secondary	Advanced



ID	City (district)*	Gender	Generation (birthdate)	Educational level	Type of Access
R7	Boadilla	Man	Mobile Dig. Natives (1998)	Secondary	Simple
R8	Madrid (Retiro)	Woman	Dig. Immigrants (1987)	Higher	Simple
R9	Madrid (Salamanca)	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1993)	Higher	Advanced
R10	Madrid (Tetuán)	Man	Dig. Immigrants (1984)	Higher	Advanced
R11	Rivas	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1992)	Secondary	Simple
R12	Leganés	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1988)	Secondary	Simple
R13	Madrid (Chamartín)	Man	Dig. Immigrants (1986)	Higher	Multiple
R14	Las Rozas	Man	Dig. Immigrants (1985)	Secondary	Multiple
R15	Madrid (Arganzuela)	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1993)	Higher	Advanced
R16	Madrid (Centro)	Woman	Dig. Immigrants (1982)	Higher	Simple
R17	Madrid (Ciudad Lineal)	Woman	Dig. Immigrants (1987)	Higher	Multiple
R18	Madrid (Moncloa-Aravaca)	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1991)	Higher	Multiple
R19	Madrid (Arganzuela)	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1990)	Higher	Advanced
R20	Madrid (Arganzuela)	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1990)	Higher	Multiple
R21	Madrid (Villa de Vallecas)	Woman	Mobile Dig. Natives (1997)	Secondary	Multiple
R22	Rivas	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Secondary	Multiple
R23	Rivas	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Secondary	Multiple
R24	Rivas	Woman	Mobile Dig. Natives (1996)	Secondary	Simple
R25	Rivas	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Higher	Simple
R26	Madrid (Vicálvaro)	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Secondary	Multiple
R27	Rivas	Woman	Mobile Dig. Natives (1995)	Secondary	Multiple
R28	Alcobendas	Man	Pot. Dig. Natives (1994)	Secondary	Simple
R29	Madrid (Puente de Vallecas)	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1990)	Higher	Multiple
R30	Rivas	Woman	Pot. Dig. Natives (1991)	Higher	Multiple

Source: The authors's own elaboration / \*The district is included only in the case of the city of Madrid

1. *Gender*. In terms of second-level digital divide – motivations, skills and uses –, gender plays an important role in understanding digital inequalities among young people (Antonio and Tuffley, 2014; Haight *et al.*, 2014), which are no longer confined to digital access but to specific ways in which men and women incorporate digital devices into their ordinary life. This is particularly important in the Spanish context, in which the gender digital divide has been one of the main concerns of digital divide research in the last decades (Castaño *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, the sample includes sixteen women and fourteen men.

2. *Generation*. The author's approximation is based on Mannheim's notion of generational location (1993), due to his view that incorporating digital technologies to life during childhood and adolescence could affect later life stages and engender

generational identities (Bolin, 2018). Nevertheless, it needs to be connected with other social, economic and cultural conditions. In this study's sample, three prototypical generational locations – related to the technological landscape present during subjects' primary socialization process – have been identified:

>*Forced Digital Immigrants (six interviews)*: born between 1982 and 1987; they have experienced the transition between analogical and digital technologies due to the fact that personal computers and Internet broadband connections were not present in their lives until late adolescence;

>*Potential Digital Immigrants (eighteen interviews)*: born between 1988 and 1994; they are characterized by intensive use of personal computers and the Internet during adolescence, but they have incorporated mobile devices and other forms of connectivity later in life;

>*Mobile Digital Natives (six interviews)*: born as of 1995; they have been socialized since childhood in a multiple mobile and diversified digital environment, in which access is enabled by means of various devices (computers, smartphones, tablets, consoles, TVs, etc.), no longer confined to physical plugged connection.

3. *Educational level*. Recent studies suggest that education and cultural capital (Haight *et al.*, 2014; Mariën and Prodnik, 2014; Dutton and Reisdorf, 2019) are the most important variables for understanding the second level digital divide, whilst economic condition is particularly related to material access. Therefore, our sample is composed of sixteen subjects with compulsory secondary education and fourteen subjects with higher education.

4. *Type of access*. Finally, access is still an important dimension of the digital divide, being no longer limited to physical connection to the Internet but with material access (Van Deursen and van Dijk, 2019), in which particular affordances (Schäfer, 2011) of different devices must be taken into consideration. We established three typical forms of accessibility:

>*Smartphone access (ten interviews)*: an almost exclusive use of smartphones to access the Internet;

>*Multiple access (fourteen interviews)*: a combination of frequent use of mobile phones and personal computers to access the Internet. Computers are usually needed for particular productive tasks, at home, university or work;

>*Advanced access (six interviews)*: a flexible and intense use of many different devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, wearables, etc.), taking advantage of their particular affordances in order to get better proficiency.

## **TECHNO-BIOGRAPHICAL TRAJECTORIES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE**

The author proposes the following typology of four techno-biographical trajectories that can be identified in youngsters' narratives: '(T1) pro-technology users', '(T2) practical users', '(T3) mobile users' and '(T4) professional users'. These four categories work as ideal

types, since in each of them, some of different dimensions of technological domestication and digital literacy stand out. The presence in these types of different socio-structural variables used to structure the sample has also been analyzed, which is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Typology of techno-biographical trajectories

TECHNO-BIOGRAHPIES	T1. Pro-technology users	T2. Practical users	T3. Mobile users	T4. Professional users
Summary				
	Early and intense use of personal computer	Adaptability and change of devices and tools	Early and intense use of mobile phones, scarce use of computer	Intensive use of computer in professional milieus
Technological Domestication				
Computer	Early / Intense	Early / Occasional	Early / Occasional	Late / Intense
Mobile phones	Late	Intermediate	Early	Intermediate
Digital Literacies				
Self-perceived level of skills	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic	Intermediate
Motivation	Motivated self-capacitation	Unconscious self-capacitation	Unconscious self-capacitation	Motivated self-capacitation
Formality	Informal and formal	Informal	Informal	Formal
Sociality	Digital mediators	Proxy users	Proxy users	Social practices
Socio-Structural Variables				
Gender	+ Men	+ Women	Both	Both
Generation	Potential Digital Natives	Potential Digital Natives	Mobile Digital Natives	Forced digital immigrants
Education	IT linked	Secondary	Secondary	Superior

Source: The author's own elaboration

### T1. Pro-Technology users

*I use the smartphone just for making calls, or taking a picture, but generally I always use the computer. (...) I have always liked technology, in general, since childhood I have enjoyed working with computers. I study software engineering, and it is also about messing around with components and programs. I also like videogames, so many things that are not directly associated with technology are, somehow, linked with it. (...) Before starting this degree I studied a course of electronics; (...) I didn't like it too much, but I coursed two subjects about programming that I enjoyed a lot (R5, Man, 1995).*

The first trajectory is linked to a high level of motivation towards the use of personal computers, which have been part of daily life experience of youngsters since childhood. These users use a wide variety of digital devices – smartphones, tablets, video-games consoles. However, they feel particularly comfortable when using desktop personal computers, which are incorporated to many activities: gaming, communication, information-seeking, media consumption, etc. Regarding their technological domestication, their interest in computers is based on an early intense socialization with them since childhood, either because they were growing up in a family environment in which computers were present, or, in some cases, during adolescence. In the latter case, it is linked to digital friendship shared practices that engendered their interest in experiencing with digital technologies. Therefore, their lack of important physical constrains that limit access and their motivated interest in exploring with personal computers and other tech-devices lead to a pro-technology habitus in which youngsters' identity is extremely entangled with the digital world. They represent what David S. White and Alison Le Cornu (2011) call residents of the digital realm, since their digital activities are usually not oriented to solve practical necessities, but rather towards the pleasure of navigating, exploring new features and 'being' online: this is what Laura Robinson calls disinterested forms of use (Robinson, 2009, 2014), since digital practices are mostly a motivated interest and curiosity rather than resulting from actual practical needs.

As far as their digital literacy is concerned, it is mainly based on motivated self-capacitation processes in which users invest their higher level of digital skills and awareness of the potentialities of digital tools in order to further increase their competencies – their digital capital (Ragnedda, 2018). Phenomenologically, there is a strong familiarity with ICTs internalized in their habitus, whose dispositions are continuously deployed with the aim of acquiring new skills and competencies, since it is a pleasure for them to learn new features of the digital world. Besides, this kind of users act as digital mediators in their social circles, since they usually help friends, family members and other acquaintances to fulfill difficult digital tasks: for them, exploring with digital devices is more a challenge than a burden. Therefore, for many of those belonging to other types of users, it is important to have a pro-technology friends who could help them when they experience some difficulties in their digital practices, as we it will be seen within the descriptions of other types.

Also, regarding their sociodemographic profile, there is a wider presence of men, especially in the case of older respondents, since pro-technology dispositions have usually been associated with masculinity (Castaño *et al.*, 2011). As a consequence, especially during childhood and adolescence, this gender divide has led to a higher interest in learning about digital technologies among men. In terms of age, this trajectory is more frequent among potential digital natives and force digital immigrants, since they have lived during their adolescence in a technological landscape in which Internet accessibility was confined to personal computers and fixed broadband connections. In the case of mobile digital natives, they have incorporated smartphones during this life stage, so the probability of developing this type of habitus linked to the intensive use of computers is less frequent. Finally, in terms of educational level, there is an important presence of youngsters interested in superior or vocational studies related to information and

communication technologies – computer engineering, software design, programming, etc.. This is logical, because this interest in IT courses and degrees is usually a consequence of their previous pro-technological habitus engendered during adolescence.

## T2. Practical users

*Nowadays I don't own a computer, I have inherited my brother's one, but I have never thought of buying one on my own. At school I still didn't have at home, I remember going to my cousin's office after school and using hers. (...) I just used it to communicate with friends by Messenger from 1 to 3. (...) Frequently, at high school I used my sister's computer, but just for doing homework and things like that. (...) On the other hand, I had a mobile phone quite early, I used it to send SMSs and making some calls, not many since it was expensive. (...) Afterwards, with the arrival of smartphones, mostly the same, I was one of the last in my circle of friends to have one... I am not very interested in technology and I don't use anything if I can avoid it. It is the same with Instagram, I don't want to use it but there is a moment in which you are forced to have it (R22, Men 1994).*

The second trajectory is characterized by the constant migration between technological devices and digital tools following the transformations in subjects' practical necessities at each life stage and social field of interaction. In terms of accessibility, these youngsters are used to computers and mobile phones, but their use of computers is much more specific and sporadic than in the case of pro-technology users, since their technological socialization is linked to the practical tasks they need to deploy in different moments of their lives. Therefore, during adolescence they use mainly communicative tools, such as *Messenger* or the first social networks, SMS, voice calls, basic information-seeking activities linked with high school and leisure practices developed in consonance with the interests and motivations of their social circle. Unlike mobile users (T3), practical users feel quite comfortable using different digital devices – including computers or video-games consoles. However, they do not usually develop a deep interest in exploring the possibilities of such technologies. Their connectivity is much more punctual and instrumental, so they fit in the category of 'visitors' (White and Le Cornu, 2011) rather than 'residents' of the digital world: their digital appropriation is pragmatic, since they see technology as a means to an end, not an end in itself. They are, therefore, quite similar to practical users, as described by Robinson (2009) regarding computer domestication. Yet, the fact that the use of smartphones and mobile broadband systems has increased and changed significantly during the last decade has to be taken into account. Consequently, Robinson's typology needs to be adjusted to the current technological landscape in which youngsters interact.

Regarding digital literacy, among practical users the most common forms of literacy are unconscious self-capacitation processes linked to the practical appropriation of digital devices, as well as punctual dependence on social support in the case of advanced tasks. This is why, as the quote above remarks, this category of youngsters usually lags behind their social circle, adapting their technological performance to the necessities they perceive at any moment. As a consequence, these users are commonly in need of guidance and support from people around who are more interested in technology. Practical users do not feel the necessity of investing energy and time in acquiring new advanced skills if they are not connected with practical or concrete uses, so – like mobile users – they can be

described as 'proxy users': they depend on others' digital competencies in order to fulfill advance tasks. Therefore, the importance of social capital is extremely relevant among these youngsters, taking into account that they do not have motivation, confidence and interest to acquire new competencies on their own. This is why social digital literacy is ambivalent in terms of self-empowerment: practical users can mobilize their social capital in order to fulfill digital tasks, which they could not do on their own. However, this dependence on others can lead to self-exclusion processes, in which subjects do not feel the necessity of investing time and effort to acquire new digital skills that could help them in the future. Within the section dedicated to mobile users, this type of socially mediated literacy will be presented as well.

Finally, regarding their sociodemographic profile, among practical users, there is a wider representation of potential digital natives (born between 1988 and 1994) and women, since these social groups developed an intense use of personal computers during adolescence – for basic communicative and information tasks – but, afterwards, they commonly migrated to smartphones and tablets, which are perceived as devices better adapted for their own necessities. Nevertheless, the association between masculinity and digital competency, is much clearer among older respondents and less-educated people, since the gender usage divide has nuanced much more during recent years. Therefore, the different historical periods of socialization during childhood and adolescence – the 1990s and the early 2000s in comparison with the late 2000s and afterwards – are extremely relevant to the analysis of the influence of gender in technological appropriation. Among mobile digital natives, there are still gender differences, but they are becoming much less clear because the diversified digital environment is no longer dependent on the use of personal computers. Finally, among practical users there is a higher proportion of medium-educated youngsters, since many college students develop new digital dispositions linked to the necessity of increasing their competencies in the use of personal computers, as it will be seen within the section dedicated to the fourth techno-biographical trajectory.

### T3. Mobile users

*I mainly use the mobile phone unless I have to use Word, but I feel computer is much more uncomfortable to use. (...) My smartphone screen is quite big, it is easier to use it when I am in bed; I also have my phone charger at hand, so I don't need to lose a second to charge it. (...) And I can carry it out to the bathroom, for instance. And then is quality, I have an iPhone and the screen quality is much better than my computer, which is a 400€-computer. (...) I couldn't have a low range mobile phone, but I don't care too much about the computer, because I don't use it more than once a day, or even less. (...) My iPhone is better for everything: it has a camera, it is faster, easier to use, the quality of the battery, etc. (R24, Woman 1996).*

The third trajectory is quite similar to T2, but in this case the use of computer is even less common, since most of these users have been intensively socialized in the use of mobile phone since childhood, particularly as soon as smartphones started to be widely available for substituting computers in many daily practices related to the use of the Internet. This type of users rely on smartphones to fulfill all their digital necessities, since they did not incorporate computers to their practices during adolescence, so they are not familiar with them, and, consequently, they choose to spend more money on a top-range smartphone rather than on a better computer. Usually, they only have access at home to old-fashioned

family desktop computers that they have usually inherited, or low-range laptops used just on very specific occasions, when they need to do something that cannot be done with a mobile phone – such as, writing a document or using a specific program unavailable on other devices. Even in these cases, they feel uneasy and they depend on others for many advanced activities, even more than practical users. In terms of the distinction between disinterested and practical activities, they combine a strong familiarity and disinterested use of smartphones with a radically practical approach towards computers, which are seen as a burden they need to deal with on some occasions.

In terms of digital literacy, they rely on unconscious self-capacitation processes, but just with smartphones, since they do not have any familiarity with computers, so they use these devices with discomfort and even ‘fear’. Consequently, they try to reduce to a minimum the use of such devices, even though they are quite confident and experienced in the appropriation of mobile phones and even tablets. Neither are they particularly interested in technology as such, since they also conceptualize digital devices as means to an end, which usually is linked with communication, information seeking and leisure, but not with productive tasks. As in the case of practical users, they rely on their social capital in order to overcome their limitations in terms of digital competencies, but their lack of interest in developing new skills that could help them to fulfill such tasks on their own is even more evident than in T2. Therefore, even if they are not digitally excluded in terms of accessibility to ICTs, they show a lower level of motivation and interest in increasing their digital skills, since they do not perceive the necessity of it and, in many cases, they are not confident enough about their possibilities of getting along properly in the digital realm. This is why they also fit the role of proxy users, particularly with computers, whilst in the case of the use of smartphones they always try to learn the basic features that allow them to get along without deepening their knowledge of advanced possibilities or configurations of these devices.

Socio-demographically, in this biographical trajectory, there is a wider presence of mobile digital natives (born after 1995) and, in a few cases, also forced digital immigrants (born between 1982 and 1987), because it is more probable to develop this kind of trajectory among youngsters who did not have the necessity to intensively use computers during their childhood and adolescence. In the case of mobile natives, they had the alternative of the smartphone to fit communicative necessities, whilst in the case of older youngsters, computers were not as common during their adolescence as a few years later. Of course, there are members of these two generational groups that would fit another type, but the tendency is that many potential natives (1988-1995) fit better the category of practical users, since they (at least) had to use communicational tools such as *Messenger* during their adolescence. In terms of gender, there are differences as clear as in T1 and T2 – especially among younger respondents, whose use of mobile phones has been quite intense during life for both genders. Nevertheless, when it comes to the level of education, there is quite a clear link to this trajectory of people with basic and secondary studies, since the use of computers is needed in most of superior degrees. Therefore, university (and some job positions) can be viewed as an important way of acquiring computer literacy, as it will be developed in the next section.

#### T4. Professional users

*My use of the computer has radically changed, since I use it for every formal thing that I need to do, like writing a document. You are not in the world if you don't know how to use it. (...) Everything is digitalized and nowadays more and more activities require using a computer. (...) In my case, I have learnt a lot about it recently, forced by work, since my colleagues love Excel and I told myself: 'I have to learn how to use it'. (...) I looked up for some tutorial, I asked a colleague to teach me, 'do a chart', 'use that formula', 'do this', and step by step I am learning, because I don't want to be a burden. (...) For me it's difficult, there are a lot of codes and possibilities, but the benefits are incredible'*(R30, Woman 1990).

Finally, the fourth trajectory is associated with professional contexts of use of digital technologies, such as the academic environment and workspaces. In terms of technological appropriation, there can be recognized a pattern of youngsters who started to intensively use computers for professional matters after adolescence, when they entered university or when they obtained work positions that rely on ICTs. Therefore, in comparison with T1, the distinction between private and professional use is extremely relevant, since professional users start to acquire advanced digital competences only for fulfilling productive tasks, whilst pro-technology users already possess an earlier personal motivation towards digital culture. Consequently, this is an ideal type of biography in which scarce technological socialization during childhood and adolescence is compensated with an accelerated process of intensive domestication of computers after the age of eighteen, in a short period of time. Therefore, in this case, domestication works as a secondary socialization process in which subjects internalize new dispositions towards technology that compensate their previous lack of interest and competencies. This last group thus shows a higher level of digital skills – specifically those associated with productive tasks and computers – than practical and mobile users, but usually lower than pro-technology users, since they have not experienced a long-lasting process of progressive technological socialization.

Furthermore, regarding digital literacy, in this group formal aspects stand out in comparison with the more informal unconscious process of literacy. This means that their acquisition of competencies is closely interwoven with their professional activity. Thus, it is characterized by specialization in a series of advanced digital tasks, in comparison with pro-technology users, who also have internalized a more general dispositional motivation towards experimenting with digital devices as such. Nevertheless, apart from this salient productive task, this secondary socialization process also serves as a subjective process of internalization of experiences, dispositions and attitudes towards technologies used, which could afterwards be transferred into other forms of using ICTs. In other words, the importance of professional forms of literacy is less linked to specific digital skills acquired, but rather with general confidence and motivation internalized in the experience of using technology itself, as the quotation at the beginning of the section shows. Such experiences place professional users in a better position in terms of digital skills than practical and mobile users, so they become less dependent on social support and rely more on self-motivated learning processes. In fact, professional users actually rely on social support, but they can use social support to motivate themselves to acquire new skills rather than just delegate their activity to others.

In terms of a socio-demographic profile, having a professional techno-biography is closely linked with educational and cultural capital, since there are university and vocational students who can internalize more frequently this secondary technological socialization itinerary. Also, according to this research, the trajectory in question can be identified more frequently among digital immigrants and potential natives. It is worth noting that the mere reason for this is the fact that it was not possible to reconstruct mobile immigrants' biographies under the age of twenty – they were not old enough at the moment of interviewing them. The case of older youngster who become interested in technology when they need to adapt to a highly digitalized labor environment in which they were not been socialized early on is particularly relevant. Therefore, from the point of view of gender, even if this trajectory is quite common for both women and men, in the case of women its importance is crucial in order to compensate their previous lack of intensive digital literacy, particularly among older women who were socialized in a context in which gender bias regarding familiarity with ICTs was more evident. It is relevant that among highly educated women, self-perceived confidence about the use of digital technologies – in comparison to men – is much lower than among low-educated women, who are more commonly affected by the emotional digital divide (Huang *et al.*, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

In this paper, the author has developed a generational analysis of young adults' biographies of socialization in the use of ICTs, taking into account the material dimension of appropriation of digital devices – domestication (Silverstone, 1993) – and the subjective dimension of internalized dispositions – digital literacies (Erstad, 2011). During last two decades, digital divide studies have focused on different aspects of digital inequality – accessibility, motivation, competencies, differential uses of ICTs, *etc.*, pointing out that social inequalities are not just reproduced but intensified online (Ragnedda, 2017). In the case of youngsters, this skeptical approach to the emancipatory potential of information society has served to dismantle certain deterministic and universalistic approaches which conceptualize youngsters as the prototypical autocratic myth of neoliberal capitalism (Selwyn, 2009). Nevertheless, there is still little solid research about the specific processes of socialization and incorporation of digital technologies through lives, especially in a context of fast technological change in which the impact of such technologies could extremely vary from one generation to the next one in a short period of time.

This is why, in this paper, the author has reconstructed four ideal types of biographical trajectories of socialization in the use of ICTs among youngsters included in the group of supposed digital natives. By using a generational division in three generational groups (forced digital immigrants, potential digital natives and mobile digital natives) regarding the available technological landscape during childhood and adolescence, a variety of forms of technological appropriation and its relevance in people's current digitally mediated practices can be understood. On the one hand, pro-technology users and professional users stand out because of their interest in increasing their digital skills and

their wider array of digital practices, but the origin of their socialization is quite different: in the case of pro-technology users, their motivation is based on a long-term process of domestication of digital devices since childhood and adolescence, whilst in the case of professional users, it is driven by a secondary socialization process associated with work and university. Consequently, although pro-technology users show higher levels of digital competencies, professional users are generally interested in applying their recently internalized digital competencies in new private fields of activity that could improve their life chances. On the other hand, practical and mobile users have in common their lack of interest in learning new features of the digital world, since they are mainly visitors who develop a practical approach towards technology (Robinson, 2009; White and Le Cornu, 2011). Mobile users tend to depend exclusively on smartphones and mobile devices, whilst practical users are more used to changing tools and devices during different life stages, following the necessities of their social worlds. In terms of literacy, these trajectories are extremely dependent on social support (Courtois and Verdegem, 2016) – proxy uses. Therefore, they are in a worse position when it comes to taking advantage of the potential opportunities of the digital world.

In conclusion, digital accessibility is a necessary but not sufficient condition for understanding people's patterns of domestication of technology, which are closely interconnected with their social contexts and biographically developed experiences of use. Consequently, digital dispositions and familiarity with technological devices and tools seem more important than specific digital skills for engendering more flexible and diverse forms of appropriation, since some important barriers that prevent people from using the Internet are motivational (Reisdorf and Grosej, 2017) and emotional (Huang *et al.*, 2015). Hence, experiencing secondary technological socialization processes, such as professional users, is extremely important, since these subjects can transfer some of their competencies and dispositions acquired at work and university to new contexts of use, increasing people's confidence and familiarity in the use of digital device. The effect of social support, on the other hand, is ambivalent, since it empowers the subjects already motivated towards the acquisitions of new competencies, whilst already excluded subjects just delegate their digital practice to others, feeding a vicious circle of self-exclusion from the digital realm.

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# RAZUMIJEVANJE TEHNOLOŠKE SOCIJALIZACIJE: SOCIOGENERACIJSKO ISTRAŽIVANJE TEHNOBIOGRAFSKIH PUTOVA MLADIH U MADRIDSKOJ REGIJI

Daniel Calderón Gómez

**SAŽETAK** U ovom članku autor zauzima sociogeneracijsku perspektivu kako bi rekonstruirao biografije mladih u smislu socijalizacije za korištenje informacijskih i komunikacijskih tehnologija (IKT) u madridskoj regiji. Pri tome se oslanja na Bourdieuv pristup, koji uključuje dvije povezane dimenzije toga procesa: materijalnu domestikaciju IKT-a u svakodnevnim aktivnostima i distinktivnu digitalnu pismenost internaliziranu kao dispozicije prema praksi. Analiza je, na uzorku od trideset dubinskih (in-depth) intervjua strukturiranom po rodu, dobi, obrazovanju i načinu pristupa digitalnim sadržajima, utvrdila postojanje četiri idealna tehnobiografska puta (T1 – protehnoški korisnici, T2 – praktični korisnici, T3 – mobilni korisnici, T4 – profesionalni korisnici) koji predstavljaju distinktivne oblike usvajanja digitalnih tehnologija u praksi.

## KLJUČNE RIJEČI

MLADI, INTERNET, DIGITALNI JAZ, DIGITALNI UROĐENICI, GENERACIJSKA ANALIZA

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# NEPRESTANA POVEZANOST I STRAH OD PROPUŠTANJA U SVAKODNEVNIM INTERAKCIJAMA MLADIH LICEM U LICE<sup>1</sup>

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**SAŽETAK** U ovom eksplorativnom istraživanju provedenom u Zagrebu putem promatranja bez sudjelovanja i dubinskih intervjua nastojali su se otkriti učestalost, obrasci i motivi uporabe pametnih telefona za vrijeme druženja mladih pripadnika generacije Z (osobe rođene u periodu kasnih 90-ih godina 20. stoljeća i u prvom desetljeću 21. stoljeća) licem u lice, kako bi se istražila potreba za neprestanom povezanošću mladih i s time povezan strah od propuštanja. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da mladi za vrijeme druženja licem u lice pametne telefone koriste kako bi premostili pad intenziteta razgovora i generirali nove teme, s varijacijama u dinamici uporabe koja ovisi o veličini grupe i kvaliteti poznanstva članova. Dodatno, istraživanjem je otkriveno da su mladi neprestano povezani po navici – naročito oni koji se nalaze u ljubavnoj vezi. Neprestana je povezanost, u načelu, rezultat dosade i želje za zabavom, a takva povezanost može dovesti do stresa i straha od propuštanja. Taj se strah manifestira u situacijama kada mladi ostaju bez pametnog telefona zbog čega se osjećaju „odsječenima od svijeta“. Također, zbog visokih očekivanja neprestane komunikacijske prisutnosti mladi osjećaju pritisak za brzom komunikacijom, što generira stresne situacije.

## KLJUČNE RIJEČI

NEPRESTANA POVEZANOST, STRAH OD PROPUŠTANJA, PAMETNI TELEFON, GENERACIJA Z

Bilješka o autorima

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## UVOD: PAMETNI TELEFON KAO SASTAVNI DIO DRUŠTVENE SVAKODNEVNICE MLADIH

Posjedovanje pametnih telefona među mladima danas je gotovo pa postalo pravilo. U travnju 2018. godine 95 % adolescenata iz Sjedinjenih Američkih Država izjavilo je kako posjeduje ili pak ima pristup pametnom telefonu, a glavnina vremena koje provode koristeći ga odnosi se na *online* aktivnosti (Anderson i Jiang, 2018: 2). Mladi Europljani ne kaskaju za mladim američkim susjedima pa tako 94 % mladih u Europskoj uniji (od 16 godina do 24 godine) pristupa internetu putem pametnog telefona (Eurostat, 2016: 1). Štoviše, prosječan mladić (od 18 godina do 24 godine) u Velikoj Britaniji dnevno „surfa“ putem pametnog telefona 3 sata i 40 minuta, a djevojke 50 minuta manje (Ofcom, 2018: 67). Stanje u Hrvatskoj vjerno reprezentira stanje u Europi. Pametni telefon kao uređaj za pristupanje internetu s 53,7 % definitivno prednjači nad ostalim uređajima, pa tako 91,6 % Hrvata više puta dnevno koristi internet, a mladi u Hrvatskoj (od 18 do 29 godina) koriste internet češće od svih drugih dobnih skupina (Ipsos Connect, 2019: 5, 15).

Učestala upotreba pametnih telefona među mladima uvelike se svodi na *online* komunikaciju. Od različitih komunikacijskih sadržaja koji su dostupni putem pametnih telefona mladi u Europi najviše razmjenjuju instantne poruke, zovu nekoga ili pristupaju društvenim mrežama (Vorderer i sur., 2016: 699; TNS Political & Social, 2016: 11). Isto vrijedi i u Hrvatskoj, jer prema posljednjim podacima 91 % mladih (od 18 do 29 godina) koristi internet za odgovaranje na e-poruke, 87 % za komunikaciju putem *chat*-aplikacija, a 84 % za posjećivanje društvenih mreža (Ipsos Connect, 2019: 16). Da je „online svijet snažno utkan u socijalni život mladih“ pokazali su Sally Quinn i Julian Oldmeadow (2013: 137) svojim istraživanjem prema kojem dječaci i adolescenti značajno profitiraju od korištenja društvenih mreža s obzirom na to da umreženost koreliraju s osjećajem društvene pripadnosti, tj. pripadnosti grupi.

Prema Deborah Chambers društvene su mreže za adolescente „temelj za formiranje identiteta i društvenih skupina. Putem tračanja, očijukanja, zezanja i druženja one su postale dio svakodnevice života adolescenata“ (2013: 100). Ovome u prilog govore i podatci o tome da se 59 % američkih adolescenata zbog društvenih mreža osjeća znatno povezanije sa svojim ljubavnim partnerom, dok njih 44 % tvrdi da im društvene mreže pomažu osjećati se emocionalno bliskima (Lenhart i sur., 2015: 5).

Rezultati istraživanja na osnovnoškolskoj i srednjoškolskoj djeci te studentima iz Hrvatske također snažno sugeriraju da mladi koriste društvene mreže i pametne telefone prvenstveno kako bi se povezivali i komunicirali s prijateljima (Kunić i sur., 2017: 158; Relja i Božić, 2012: 147; Rattinger, 2018: 55). Pametni telefoni igraju važnu ulogu u procesu socijalizacije i održavanja vršnjačkih odnosa zbog svoje mobilnosti i dostupnosti, ističu Renata Relja i Tina Božić, „što je vidljivo u činjenici da mladi ne izlaze bez mobitela, a u slučaju da se to i dogodi, osjećaju njegov nedostatak“ (2012: 146-147). Upravo komunikacija koja uvelike uključuje korištenje pametnih telefona obilježava novu kulturu komuniciranja (Relja i Božić, 2012: 147).

## STALNI PROVJERAVATELJI, STRAH OD PROPUŠTANJA I POVEĆANJE STRESA

Može se kazati da mladi danas žive u „multimedijalnim čajurama“ vršnjačke intimnosti posredovane pametnim telefonima. Zbog brzine i gotovo neprekidne prisutnosti društvene mreže i ostale *online* komunikacijske aplikacije podrazumijevaju uvlačenje u digitalni prostor koji pak podrazumijeva odvlačenje od ulica, parkova, igrališta i sl. Štoviše, da bi se sudjelovalo u vršnjačkom društvu, osoba mora biti upućena u medijske mogućnosti određene društvene mreže ili, doslovno, kako bi mogli participirati u društvenoj stvarnosti, mladi moraju znati na koji način proizvesti adekvatan sadržaj (Chambers, 2013: 87-88). U posljednjih nekoliko godina želja ljudi da budu u toku s digitalnom društvenom zbiljom manifestirala se u fenomenu permanentne ili neprestane umreženosti na komunikacijskim aplikacijama ili društvenim mrežama (engl. *permanently connected*). Gotovo polovina punoljetnog stanovništva SAD-a ne može zamisliti svoj život bez pametnog telefona, a 86 % njih gotovo neprekidno ili vrlo često provjerava pristigle poruke, elektroničku poštu i svoje profile na društvenim mrežama. (American Psychological Association, 2017: 1-2). Peter Vorderer i sur. (2016: 699) istraživanjem su ustanovili da dvije trećine studenata „preferira imati upaljen pametni telefon tijekom noći u njihovoj neposrednoj blizini“, što indicira u kojoj je mjeri sposobnost komuniciranja ili mogućnost praćenja novosti važna. Doduše, prema istom istraživanju (2016: 699) neprestana umreženost studentima je važnija od permanentnog dotoka općih informacija, poput vijesti s portala i sl. (engl. *permanently online*).

Neprestana umreženost manifestira se u učestalom dopisivanju s prijateljima. U prosjeku studenti na poruke prijatelja i partnera odgovaraju u roku od 15 minuta, dok odgovaranje na poruke roditelja, nadređenih i sl. slijedi unutar 30 minuta. Nadalje, prema istraživanju, odgovaranje na poruke i *online* komunikacija stvaraju određeni psihološki pritisak. Većina sudionika potvrdila je da brže odgovaraju na poruke ukoliko je pošiljalatelj vidio da je poruka pročitana. Stoga neki od sudionika ne otvaraju poruke u aplikaciji (što znači da pošiljalatelj ne zna jesu li vidjeli poruku ili ne) do trenutka kada požele odgovoriti (Vorderer i sur., 2016: 701). Prema drugim istraživanjima 85 % adolescenata koji se nalaze u ljubavnoj vezi očekuje barem jednom u danu stupiti u kontakt s partnerom, dok 35 % njih očekuje kontakt svakih nekoliko sati – bilo da se oni jave partneru/partnerici ili da se njihov partner, odnosno partnerica njima javi (Lenhart i sur., 2015: 6-7). Na pitanje što se događa kada studenti nemaju pristup internetu, odnosno kada ne mogu biti neprestano umreženi, Vorderer i sur. pišu:

*Specifičan fokus u velikom broju odgovora [na to pitanje] bio je na osjećaju nepovezanosti, osjećaju da nešto važno nedostaje („golo“, „prazno“, „necivilizirano“, staromodno“, „kao da nedostaje organ“), osjećaju propuštanja i samoće [...] Za neke sudionike gubitak pristupa internetu izazvao je visoku razinu stresa i iritacije, a čak je spomenuta i panika. (2016: 699)*

Taj osjećaj propuštanja u posljednjih je nekoliko godina dobio ime – FOMO (engl. *fear of missing out*), ili strah od propuštanja, a definiran je kao „intenzivan strah da drugi imaju iskustvo (društvene) nagrade koje subjekt nema s obzirom na to da je odsutan, pa se FOMO karakterizira kao želja da se kontinuirano bude u toku s onime što drugi rade“

(Przybylski i sur., 2013: 1841). Prema recentnim istraživanjima FOMO je značajno povezan s čestom upotrebom društvenih mreža putem pametnog telefona i napose njegovom problematičnom upotrebom (Elhai i sur., 2018a: 296). Štoviše, potreba za osjećajem pripadnosti i razina autentične samoprezentacije na društvenim mrežama pozitivno je korelirana sa strahom od propuštanja. Osobe koje imaju snažnu potrebu za društvenim vezama osjećaju veći stupanj FOMO-a. Također, korelacija između FOMO-a i osjećaja društvene potpore veća je što osobe osjećaju manju društvenu potporu (Wang i sur., 2018: 137). Andrew Przybylski i sur. (2013) istraživali su povezanost FOMO-a s emocionalnim, motivacijskim i ponašajnim dispozicijama i stanjem korisnika. Prema njihovim otkrićima, što je bazična psihološka potreba za kompetencijom, autonomijom i društvenom povezanošću manje zadovoljena, to je FOMO prisutniji. Kada je riječ o mladima, njihovo istraživanje (Przybylski i sur., 2013: 1846) pokazalo je da su studenti s većom razinom FOMO-a ujedno i skloniji provjeravanju e-poruka tijekom predavanja.

Osim što pametni telefoni pod stanovitim uvjetima podupiru FOMO i generiraju stres, učestala upotreba pametnih telefona i *online* komunikacije u stresnim životnim fazama utječe na mentalno zdravlje korisnika. Studenti koji koriste SMS-ove ili aplikacije za dopisivanje kada su pod pojačanim stresom značajno umanjuju vlastitu emocionalnu stabilnost, socijalno stabilno ponašanje i zdrav san. Točnije, broj poruka u jednom danu direktno utječe na zdrav san, dok učestalo slanje poruka moderira vezu između interpersonalnog stresa i osjećaja „izgaranja“ te emocionalnog blagostanja (Murdock, 2013: 214-215).

Prema prikazanim podacima može se zaključiti da su mladi prikovani uz svoje pametne telefone uglavnom kako bi komunicirali s vršnjacima. Neprestana povezanost pak dovodi do straha od propuštanja, i to naročito kod mladih koji imaju izrazitu potrebu za povezanošću i društvenom potporom. S obzirom na tako izraženu ulogu pametnih telefona u socijalizaciji mladih, može se pretpostaviti da će njihov osjećaj straha od propuštanja i potreba za stalnim provjeravanjem novih poruka na pametnom telefonu biti manji prilikom druženja licem u lice. Opravdanje toj pretpostavci daje činjenica da su takva druženja *par excellence* primjer komunikacije adolescenata kojima je ona vrlo bitna, s obzirom na to da služi kao sredstvo i cilj socijalne interakcije (Matsumoto, 2009: 405).

## PREDMET I CILJEVI ISTRAŽIVANJA

Predmet ovog istraživanja jest korištenje pametnih telefona prilikom druženja mladih licem u lice. Generalni je cilj istražiti tipične obrasce korištenja pametnih telefona od strane mladih ljudi u interakcijama licem u lice, kao i moguću povezanost između fenomena „neprestane prisutnosti“ i „straha od propuštanja“ (FOMO).

Polazeći od tako definiranog predmeta i generalnog istraživačkog cilja, definirani su sljedeći specifični ciljevi istraživanja:

1. otkriti učestalost pojedinačne upotrebe pametnih telefona za vrijeme druženja mladih licem u lice;

2. detektirati i opisati tipične obrasce korištenja pametnih telefona za vrijeme druženja mladih licem u lice;
3. opisati pojedine navike i motive uporabe pametnih telefona za vrijeme druženja licem u lice;
4. istražiti postoji li potreba za stalnom umreženošću mladih putem pametnih telefona i kako se ona manifestira;
5. istražiti strah od propuštanja i osjećaje mladih u donosu na učestalo korištenje pametnih telefona.

## METODA I UZORAK

### Metoda

Sukladno eksplorativnoj naravi postavljenih ciljeva istraživanje je provedeno korištenjem kvalitativnih metoda istraživanja: posredstvom metode promatranja i metode dubinskog intervjua. Metoda promatranja korištena je zato što je u okviru društvenih znanosti ona pogodna kao metoda eksplanatornog istraživanja, tj. korisna je za prikupljanje neposrednih uvida koji mogu poslužiti kao prvi korak u pokušaju objašnjenja i razumijevanja ljudskog ponašanja. Shodno tome, glavni razlog izbora te metode istraživanja navika i motiva korištenja pametnih telefona pri druženju mladih licem u lice jest taj što promatranje omogućava izravan pristup situacijama u kojima se društvene interakcije odvijaju. Njegova osnovna prednost jest mogućnost ulaska istraživača u situaciju koja je predmet istraživanja, izvornost, neposrednost, tj. izravni doticaj sa sudionicima istraživanja. Promatranjem se omogućuje stvaranje slike o ponašanju kakvo ono uistinu jest, tj. istraživač se ne mora oslanjati na iskaze kojima sudionici rekonstruiraju situaciju u kojoj su se nalazili ili motive svojeg djelovanja (Daymon i Holloway, 2005: 203).

Promatranje je provedeno u formi prikrivenog strukturiranog promatranja (bez sudjelovanja). To znači da je, shodno ciljevima istraživanja, konstruiran protokol, odnosno matrica za promatranje u koju su tijekom promatranja unošeni sljedeći podatci: vrijeme i mjesto promatranja, broj sudionika promatrane skupine i spolna struktura skupine te broj pojedinačnih rukovanja pametnim telefonom za vrijeme perioda promatranja za svakog člana skupine. Također, bilježeni su i ovi podatci: aktivnosti kojima se bave sudionici skupine, način na koji komuniciraju, mjesto gdje se nalazi pametni telefon te vrijeme utrošeno na korištenje pametnog telefona po članu grupe.

Budući da je jedna od osnovnih manjkavosti promatranja bez sudjelovanja nemogućnost istraživača da objasni ili interpretira motive koji potiču pojedine vrste promatranog ponašanja ili nemogućnost da se interpretiraju značenja koja akteri pridaju svojem ponašanju, ovo je istraživanje nadopunjeno i metodom polustrukturiranog dubinskog intervjua. Za razliku od promatranja koje je istraživačku pažnju fokusiralo na eksploraciju modaliteta korištenja pametnih telefona u društvenim interakcijama mladih, metodom dubinskih intervjua prikupljene su spoznaje o navikama mladih u korištenju pametnih telefona tijekom njihovih druženja licem u lice. Dakle, osnovna svrha dubinskih intervjua bila

je da se od samih korisnika pametnih telefona prikupe interpretacije motiva i razloga zbog kojih koriste pametne telefone u situacijama društvenih interakcija licem u lice. Shodno tome, izrađen je vodič za intervju strukturiran sukladno postavljenim ciljevima istraživanja, istraživačkim pitanjima i podacima koje je generiralo samo promatranje. Konkretnije, vodič je sadržavao pitanja čija je svrha bila istraživanje sljedećih tema: 1. frekventnost i namjena uporabe pametnog telefona, 2. sveprisutnost, 3. stres i pametni telefon.

## Uzorak

Ovim istraživanjem nastojalo se obuhvatiti tzv. „generaciju Z“ koja se odnosi na osobe rođene krajem 90-ih godina 20. stoljeća i početkom prvog desetljeća 21. stoljeća (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Razlog tome jest činjenica da su pripadnici te generacije, pogotovo oni rođeni od 2000. naovamo, odrasli s računalom u rukama. U prosjeku oni pripadnici generacije Z koji su 2016. imali između 13 i 17 navršenih godina života su s 12 godina dobili svoj prvi pametni telefon. Oni između 18 i 24 navršene godine su, u prosjeku, dobili pametni telefon sa 16 godina, a oni u dobi između 25 godina i 34 godine s 20 godina (Google/Ipsos, 2016). Iz te perspektive pripadnici generacije Z referentna su skupina za istraživanja fenomena FOMO i neprestane povezanosti.

Metodom promatranja promatralo se deset skupina mladih za vrijeme druženja na javnim mjestima, poput trgova i kafića kao tipičnih mjesta za druženja mladih. Kako metoda strukturiranog promatranja bez sudjelovanja ne omogućuje egzaktno detektiranje dobi subjekata koji se promatraju, fokusiranje promatranja na pripadnike generacije Z pokušalo se postići odabirom mjesta promatranja. Zbog toga su se promatranja odvijala krajem lipnja 2017. godine u kafiću u neposrednoj blizini Studentskog centra u Zagrebu te na Glavnom kolodvoru u Zagrebu jer su to poznata mjesta na kojima se učenici srednjih škola i studenti okupljaju. Osim odabira mjesta promatranja fokusiranje promatranja na pripadnike generacije Z dodatno se pokušalo precizirati procjenom izgleda subjekata (mladolik izgled, posjedovanje ruksaka, skripti i knjiga i sl.) te odabirom tema o kojima su subjekti razgovarali, a koje je bilo moguće prepoznati (razgovor o ispitima, putovanjima, studentskim poslovima, noćnim izlascima i sl.). Maksimalno vrijeme promatranja pojedine skupine bilo je 30 minuta, a minimalno 15 minuta. Prosječna promatrana skupina sastojala se od 3,4 sudionika, s tim da je najmanju promotrenu skupinu činilo dvoje sudionika, a najveću šest. Prosječno vrijeme promatranja bilo je 24 minute i 30 sekundi. Sveukupno je promotreno 34 mladih, od kojih je 16 žena i 18 muškaraca. Dvije grupe sastojale su se samo od muških ili ženskih osoba, dok je ostalih osam grupa bilo miješane spolne strukture.

Nakon istraživanja realiziranog metodom promatranja provedeno je istraživanje posredstvom dubinskih intervjua. Intervjuirano je 10 osoba iz Zagreba i okolice u dobi između 17 godina i 21 godine. Ispitana su četiri muškarca i šest žena krajem lipnja i početkom srpnja 2017. godine. Logika uzorkovanja u ovom slučaju predstavljala je kombinaciju prigodnog uzorka i uzorka tipičnih slučajeva. To znači da su istraživanjem bili obuhvaćeni istraživačima dostupni pojedinci za koje je bilo moguće utvrditi da su im svojstvena obilježja koja ih svrstavaju u generaciju Z te koja ih čine relevantnim s obzirom na postavljene ciljeve istraživanja. Drugim riječima, uzorak su činile osobe za koje je bilo moguće konstatirati da: a) pripadaju generaciji Z, b) da se koriste pametnim telefonom i c) da sudjeluju u

vršnjačkim druženjima, što ih čini pogodnima za davanje uvida u motive, osjećaje i navike korištenja pametnih telefona za vrijeme društvenih interakcija licem u lice.

## REZULTATI ISTRAŽIVANJA

### Korištenje pametnih telefona tijekom društvenih interakcija mladih

U svih deset promatranih skupina sveukupno su zabilježene 124 pojedinačne upotrebe pametnog telefona. Prosječna zabilježena uporaba pametnog telefona po pojedinačnom sudioniku jest 3,6 puta u 24 minute i 30 sekundi. Maksimalna zabilježena uporaba pametnog telefona bila 10 puta od strane jedne osobe u grupi koju se promatralo 30 minuta. S druge strane, u dvije različite grupe zamijećeno je da tri člana nisu ni jednom uporabila pametni telefon u promatranom vremenu. Osobe oba spola u prosjeku su jednako koristile pametni telefon za vrijeme druženja – dakle, u prosjeku 3,6 puta. Dominantna vrijednost uporabe telefona po članu promatranih skupina je četiri.

Ukupno najviše pojedinačnih uporaba pametnog telefona u jednoj grupi bilo je dvadeset jedan u maksimalnih trideset minuta promatranja. Najmanje pojedinačnih uporaba mobilnih telefona u jednoj grupi je tri.

Tablica 1. Uporaba pametnih telefona u promatranim grupama

Zbroj promatranih osoba u svim skupinama	34
Zbroj pojedinačnih uporaba pametnog telefona u svim skupinama	124
Prosječno vrijeme promatranja skupina	24 min i 30 s
Prosječan broj upotrebe pametnog telefona po članu skupine	3,6
Najčešća vrijednost uporabe pametnog telefona po članu skupine	4
Najveća zabilježena vrijednost uporabe pametnog telefona od strane člana skupine	10
Najmanja zabilježena vrijednost uporabe pametnog telefona od strane člana skupine	0
Najviše pojedinačnih uporaba pametnog telefona na grupnoj razini	21
Najmanje pojedinačnih uporaba pametnog telefona na grupnoj razini	3

U fokusu kvalitativnih metoda istraživanja, pogotovo ukoliko se koriste u svrhu početne eksploracije određenog fenomena, nije generaliziranje nalaza istraživanja. Međutim, one mogu poslužiti kao korisno sredstvo za konstrukciju pretpostavki o tome kako se određene pojave odvijaju, koje su moguće karakteristike pojedinih fenomena i/ili koje su vjerojatne inačice njihove manifestacije. Shodno tome, i rezultati provedenog promatranja naznačuju neke od mogućih obrazaca korištenja mobilnih telefona u svakodnevnim interakcijama mladih. Rezultati sugeriraju da se u interakcijama licem u lice, s manjim ili većim intenzitetom, pojavljuju tri relativno jasno strukturirana obrasca korištenja pametnih telefona.

### ***Pametni telefon kao multimedijsko pojačalo***

U grupama koje su činile tri osobe, a takvih je bila polovica od ukupnog broja promotrenih, opaženo je da prilikom opadanja intenziteta konverzacije ili rasprave, zbog neke kraće aktivnosti, najčešće barem jedna osoba u grupi poseže za pametnim telefonom. U takvim slučajevima uočen je svojevrsni domino-efekt: nakon što prva osoba posegne za telefonom i preostala dva člana također posežu za telefonom. Nakon toga obično slijedi kratka zaokupljenost (otprilike minutu ili dvije), svih članova ili barem dva člana, nekim od sadržaja koje nude pametni telefoni, a koja traje do pronalaženja neke nove teme za razgovor. Također, u grupama od troje sedam je puta zamijećeno da jedan član ostalima pokazuje neki sadržaj na pametnom telefonu. Navedeni nalaz upućuje na mogućnost da se pametni telefon u interakcijama unutar grupe mladih koristi kao sredstvo osnaživanja ili „multimedijsko pojačavanje“ već postojeće teme dijaloga. Također su opažene i razlike između članova grupe s obzirom na način korištenja pametnih telefona. Neki članovi promatranih grupa od početka do kraja promatrane interakcije koristili su pametni telefon u relativno kratkim intervalima. U takvim slučajevima primijećeno je učestalo simultano verbalno komuniciranje s ostalim članovima i uporaba pametnog telefona. To je najčešće izgledalo tako da promatrani član grupe pogledom prati sadržaje na pametnom telefonu, a verbalno i mimički se referira na dijalog ostalih članova društva.

### ***Korištenje pametnog telefona „u paru“***

Korištenje pametnog telefona u paru drugi je uočeni obrazac korištenja pametnih telefona, a uočen je u grupama od dva člana.<sup>2</sup> Primjerice, u promatranoj situaciji s dvije ženske osobe obje su istovremeno koristile pametne telefone. Karakteristika te interakcije bio je visok intenzitet dijaloga. Svaka od promatranih osoba koristila je pametne telefone četiri puta tijekom promatranja. Sam početak druženja obilježila je konverzacija manjeg intenziteta tijekom koje su osobe koristile pametne telefone, s time da je povremeno jedna djevojka drugoj pokazivala određeni sadržaj. U trenutcima dok su sudionice obje dovale, ni jedna od njih nije koristila pametni telefon, a dijalog je bio vrlo dinamičan i intenzivan. Po padu intenziteta dijaloga uslijedila je obostrana uporaba pametnih telefona koja je trajala nekoliko minuta. Nakon toga je i predmet konverzacije postao sadržaj koji se konzumirao na mobilnim uređajima, što je potrajalo do kraja promatranja. U drugom slučaju u promatranoj grupi uočene su 3 pojedinačne uporabe pametnog telefona, i to od strane muške osobe, dok ga ženska osoba nije imala istaknutim na vidljivom mjestu. Ta je interakcija trajala dvadeset i tri minute, a njezina dinamika i intenzitet bili su poprilično niski. U tom slučaju jedino je muškarac koristio pametni telefon: prvi put kada je pokazivao određeni sadržaj djevojci, a u ostala dva slučaja bilo je moguće utvrditi da je samo kratko pogledao na sat i provjerio prispjele poruke, s tim da ga je sudionica upozorila na to da ne koristi pametni telefon za vrijeme njihova druženja. Moguće je pretpostaviti da je dotična djevojka svjesno izbjegavala uporabu pametnog telefona tijekom interakcije, što je ujedno izvršilo pritisak na sudionika da i on, usprkos komunikaciji slabijeg intenziteta, izbjegava njegovu uporabu. Dakle, ovaj primjer pokazuje da korištenje pametnog telefona „u paru“ podrazumijeva i obostrano sustezanje od korištenja telefona. Drugim riječima, rezultati promatranja sugeriraju ili istovremeno korištenje pametnih telefona od strane oba člana ili apstinenciju od korištenja.

<sup>2</sup> Ukupno su promotrene dvije takve grupe.

### ***Dijeljenje sadržaja „u manjim grupama“***

Rezultati našeg promatranja sugeriraju da bi taj obrazac korištenja pametnih telefona mogao biti svojstveni većim grupama (od 4 člana do 6 članova). Promotrene su tri takve grupe – jedna od četiri člana, jedna od pet članova i jedna od šest članova.<sup>3</sup> U većim grupama zamijećeno je kako uglavnom svi članovi grupe ne ulažu jednak napor u komunikaciju te da često postoji i više tema oko kojih se komunicira „u manjim grupama“. Također, u takvim grupama pojedini članovi cijelo vrijeme koriste pametni telefon te ne sudjeluju aktivno u konverzaciji. Primjerice, često se događalo da određeni broj članova većih grupa (najčešće dvoje) između sebe dijeli određene sadržaje na pametnim telefonima. Također su uočene i situacije u kojima svi članovi međusobno dijele neke sadržaje koji postaju ili već jesu tema dijaloga. Ipak, i kod većih grupa opaženo je kako i konverzacijski aktivniji članovi grupe u situaciji opadanja intenziteta konverzacije obično „otključavaju“ mobilni uređaj kako bi kratko konzumirali nove obavijesti ili poruke.

### **Motivi korištenja pametnih telefona tijekom druženja mladih licem u lice**

Kako bi se promatranjem prikupljeni uvidi u načine korištenja pametnih telefona tijekom društvenih interakcija mladih dodatno razjasnili, provedeno je deset polustrukturiranih dubinskih intervjua. Iskazi sudionika intervjua upućuju na tri tipična motiva mladenačke upotrebe pametnog telefona tijekom društvenih interakcija:

- 1) bijeg od dosade i podizanje intenziteta razgovora;
- 2) uzvraćanje na nepristojno ponašanje drugih članova grupe;
- 3) sredstvo za generiranje novih tema.

### ***Bijeg od dosade i podizanje intenziteta razgovora***

Gotovo svi sudionici intervjua potvrdili su rezultate promatranja koji sugeriraju da u slučaju opadanja intenziteta interakcija ili razgovora broj pojedinačnih uporaba pametnog telefona raste. Primjerice, iskaz sudionika 4A blizak je tipičnom odgovoru većine sudionika istraživanja, a to je da pad intenziteta dijaloga ili iscrpljivanje tema vodi u dosadu koja „otvara vrata“ uporabi pametnog telefona:

*Najčešće za vrijeme cuge dižemo mobitel kad više nemamo o čemu pričati. Ili kad si s više ljudi pa onda neki uđu u neku dublju temu u kojoj ti baš nisi nešto pa odlutaš na mobitel. Sigurno neću gledati na smartphone kad mi je baš nešto zanimljivo ili kada raspravljamo. Kada je pad intenziteta, onda i vadim mob. Kad netko drugi koristi mobitel, onda su već svi isključeni pa je najlakše i tebi isključit' se.*

U takvim slučajevima korištenje pametnih telefona uglavnom se svodi na provjeravanje pristiglih poruka ili kratak odlazak na društvene mreže kako bi se provjerile nove objave korisnika. Sudionica 1J to ovako opisuje: „Makar, ako je super društvo, nitko neće gledati na mobitel. Ali ako je neugodno ili dosadno – pijemo kavu i malo šutimo – onda će svatko htjeti malo prelistati što ima na pametnom telefonu na Facebooku ili Instagramu.“

Dakle, pametni se telefon u socijalnim interakcijama mladih koje se odvijaju licem u lice često koristi kad opadne dinamika razgovora te kada postaje „dosadnjikavo“.

<sup>3</sup> Sve grupe bile su spolno mješovite strukture, s najmanje dvije te najviše tri ženske osobe.

### ***Uzvratanje na nepristojno ponašanje drugih članova grupe***

Iako rezultati istraživanja upućuju da je korištenje pametnih telefona uobičajeno sredstvo podizanja intenziteta grupne interakcije, sudionici istraživanja kažu kako se u pojedinim situacijama „druženja na kavi“ ono može smatrati nepristojnim ponašanjem. Ističu kako ponekad postoji nelagoda vezana uz posezanje za pametnim telefonom, tj. kako postoje situacije u kojima je jedino prihvatljivo družiti se razgovarajući. Primjerice, sudionica 3A na pitanje o tome koristi li pametni telefon za „vrijeme kave“ kaže:

*Kad i svi drugi, a to je kad nam je dosadno i nemamo neke posebne teme. Onda sam na Faceu ili Instagramu, ali većinom na brzinu odgovaram na poruke jer se ne osjećam ugodno kad u društvu odgovaram na poruke jer to nekome možda smeta.*

Prema tome, posezanje za mobilnim uređajem u određenim situacijama može se tumačiti kao čin nepristojnosti, a glavni razlog jest taj što taj čin indirektno ukazuje na dosadu. Sudionici istraživanja naglašavaju da je u takvim slučajevima legitimno pravilo „reciprociteta“. Kada uporabom mobilnog telefona osoba pokaže da joj je društvo dosadno, tada druge osobe više nemaju obavezu poštivanja sugovornika. Tako sudionica 6A objašnjava da ukoliko koristi pametni telefon tijekom druženja koje se može opisati „kao dosadno“, to čini potajno i vrlo kratko, a na pitanje o tome ponaša li se isto kada netko u društvu prvi posegne za mobitelom, kaže: „Pa da. J\*#@ se... ti si prva uzela, baš me briga. Ti si kriva. Ti si prva pokazala da ti je dosadno. Tako da ja se neću ljuti, samo ti daj – tako bih se osjećala.“

### ***Sredstvo za generiranje novih tema***

Posljednji tipičan motiv korištenja mobilnih telefona istaknut u iskazima sudionika istraživanja jest taj da mladi koriste pametne telefone za vrijeme druženja licem u lice kako bi generirali nove teme. Preciznije, sudionici su nerijetko isticali da sadržaj na pametnom telefonu može biti dobra nadopuna postojećoj temi. Tako sudionica 7A objašnjava:

*Ja ne koristim toliko mob – jedino ako je neko zatišje i vidim da frendica tipka, onda ću i ja. Makar, da ona ne koristi, ne bi' ni ja iz pristojnosti. Malo proskrolam i pokažem joj nešto. Neke nove teme ispadnu – netko nešto objavi i tako se to nastavi.*

U tom kontekstu, čimbenik koji vjerojatno utječe na razinu upotrebe pametnog telefona u društvu jest broj sudionika i narav prijateljstva. Sudionica 7A ovako odgovara na pitanje kada se pametni telefon više koristi, kada je društvo veće ili manje:

*Kad je veće. Jer je puno ljudi i ljudi se grupiraju i onda ćeš pričat s nekim tko je do tebe. Tipa ako vas je malo, kad istrošite teme, onda netko hvata mobitel i onda nešto nadovežeš na nešto što vidiš i čuješ. Ali kad je manja ekipa, brže se razgovori nastavljaju. Više se hvataš za mob kad vas je više.*

Premda se ovakva interpretacija čini kompatibilnom s tezom da s padom intenziteta razgovora raste količina posezanja za pametnim telefonom, s obzirom na to da su manje skupine intenzivnije zbog manjeg broja članova, postoje iznimke. Naime, iako je sudionica 7A objasnila da joj se čini da više koristi pametni telefon u većem društvu, ona ističe da i tada razina njezine uporabe ovisi o tome tko priča: „Ako priča netko nov u društvu ili tvoj

frend ili frendica, onda ćeš slušat' jer je red, a ako nije, onda ti je manje bitno". Čini se da ne postoji uniformni obrazac za predviđanje količine uporabe pametnih telefona za vrijeme druženja licem u lice. Dotična kvantiteta ovisi o intenzitetu razgovora, veličini društva i naravi poznanstva osoba koje sudjeluju u druženju.

### Biti bez mobitela znači biti odsječen od svijeta

Osim detektiranja tipičnih motiva upotrebe pametnih telefona za vrijeme druženja mladih licem u lice, intervjuima se pokušalo utvrditi i postoji li potreba za stalnom umreženošću te manifestira li se ona u obliku straha od propuštanja. Također, nastojalo se istražiti koji osjećaji i iskustva dominiraju u životima mladih zbog učestale upotrebe pametnih telefona.

Shodno iskazima sudionika dubinskih intervjua, pametni telefon služi prvenstveno i dominantno kao sredstvo komuniciranja s prijateljima, prijateljicama ili bližnjima, a zatim kao sredstvo razonode ili zabave. Budući da se spomenuta komunikacija odvija tijekom cijelog dana, bez ikakva prethodno utvrđenog rasporeda ili posebno predviđenog vremena, pametni telefoni uvijek su u blizini mladih korisnika.

*Stalno, svaki dan, svakih pola sata, sat provjeravam što ima na mobitelu. I sada je na stolu. Navečer ga koristim obavezno, ali ne postoji vrijeme kad ga ne koristim – uvijek je sa mnom. Ako se dopisujem, onda zuj svako malo pa ga pogledam. Ili čisto odem na Instagram da vidim tko šta objavljuje. (sudionica 7A)*

Iako se obično posredstvom pametnih telefona ne komunicira o nekim važnim temama, već je obično riječ o „trivijalnim“ aspektima svakodnevnice, sudionici istraživanja smatraju kako je vrlo bitno odgovoriti na upućene pozive ili poruke koje su ujedno i daleko najčešći način komuniciranja. Primjerice, sudionica 3A kaže da iz navike otvara i čita poruke čim prispiju na mobilni telefon, čak iako one ne zahtijevaju promptan odgovor. Na pitanje o tome kako bi se osjećala kada na takve poruke ne bi odmah odgovorila, ističe sljedeće:

*Pa i dalje bi me zanimalo. Bilo bi mi žao. Većinom se dopisujem non-stop. Od jutra s curama kad ih pozdravim. Svakih 15 minuta šaljem poruke, osim u školi kada smo zajedno. Navečer, prije spavanja obavezno.*

Dodatno, većina sudionika ističe da su svi njihovi prijatelji uglavnom prisutni na društvenim mrežama, a to upućuje na to da društvene mreže pomažu sudionicima da ostanu u toku s društvenim zbivanjima. Primjerice, sudionik 9J kaže: „Mobitel je društveno važan. Pomaže ti da budeš u toku s društvom. Dosta ljudi objavljuje što radi preko dana pa tako si u toku.“

Budući da je pametni telefon uređaj koji mladima pomaže ostati u kontaktu s društvom te u toku s društvenim zbivanjima koje drže važnima, prirodno slijedi pretpostavka da će učestalo koristiti pametni telefon kako bi održali društvenu povezanost i jačali svoju društvenu uključenost. Međutim, učestalo korištenje pametnih telefona generira i specifičan odnos spram njih, tj. generira različita emotivna stanja koja su povezana s njihovom upotrebom. Provedeni dubinski intervjui sugeriraju sljedeća tri zaključka o tome kako se mladi osjećaju u odnosu na učestalu upotrebu pametnih telefona:

- 1) život bez pametnog telefona je poput života u špilji;
- 2) pametni telefon je izvor moguće ljubomore za osobe u ljubavnoj vezi;
- 3) stalna umreženost ponekad je frustrirajuća.

Iskazi sudionika dubinskih intervjua sugeriraju na postojanje fenomena FOMO. Na pitanje o tome što bi se dogodilo kada bi se pametni telefon sudionika pokvario na nekoliko dana ili pak kada bi ga zaboravili ponijeti na školski izlet, sudionici su uglavnom negativno opisivali takav scenarij. Većina je rekla da bi to kod njih izazvalo osjećaj panike, izoliranosti, odsječenosti, pa čak i straha. Sudionica 10R vrlo je sažeto to iskazala: „Osjećala bih se odsječeno od svijeta. Jer se ne mogu čuti i biti na društvenim mrežama.“ Glavni problem koji sudionici u tom scenariju navode jest nemogućnost ispunjavanja svojih komunikacijskih navika, poput dopisivanja s prijateljima i sudjelovanja u interakciji na društvenim mrežama, što bi vjerojatno moglo generirati određene socijalne gubitke.

Ipak uočene su i određene razlike između korisnika pametnih telefona. Oni korisnici koji za sebe kažu da imaju vrlo bogat društveni život – kako *online*, tako i *offline* – te uz to i ljubavnog partnera, iskazuju negativne osjećaje vezane uz hipotetsku situaciju u kojoj ostaju bez pametnog telefona. Primjerice, sudionik 5T na pitanje o tome kako bi se osjećao da sa školom ode na dvodnevni izlet bez mobilnog uređaja kaže: „Osjećat ću se golo. Stalno bih tragao za njim. Vjerojatno bi svi bili na njima [pametnim telefonima] i ja bih se tako osjećao prazno“ (uglate zagrade dodane). Na daljnja potpitanja o osjećajima koji bi se pojavljivali, 5T je nastavio: „(...) osjećao bih se isključeno. Kao da živim u pećini. Osjećao bih se kao da nešto propuštam. Pa čak možda strah, izoliranost, anksioznost – što se događa, a ja ne znam“. S druge strane, sudionici koji su relativno više vezani uz grupno dopisivanje, manje društvene interakcije i funkcionalnu uporabu pametnog telefona, iako priznaju da bi gubitak pametnog telefona u njima izazvao negativne emocije, ipak smatraju kako ne bi u velikoj mjeri bili pogođeni nedostatkom komunikacije. Na primjer, sudionik 3F ističe: „Pa svejedno, a možda čak i draže. Mog'o bi se totalno opustiti da me ništa ne smeta. Nekad je taj smartphone neka smetnja.“ Međutim, čak i kod „jakih“<sup>4</sup> korisnika postoji slučaj kad odlazak na izlet bez pametnog telefona ne djeluje toliko problematično, a to je situacija izleta u društvu najboljih prijatelja s kojima se inače odvija pretežito sva komunikacija putem pametnog telefona:

*Znamo otić' na vikendicu, ali nema signala i onda nit' imam internet nit' signala za zvat' ili sms... jedino se s mamom hvatam po brdu kad se hoćemo čut'. I onda je stalno zafrkancija s curama; s njima sam pa se nit' nemam potrebu čut' mobom.* (sudionik 6A)

Strah od propuštanja (tzv. FOMO) samo je jedna od snažnih emocija povezanih s učestalom upotrebom pametnih telefona. Naime, dubinski intervjui otkrivaju da učestala upotreba pametnih telefona dovodi do još jedne snažne emocije, osobito kod osoba koje su u ljubavnoj vezi. Generalno, neprestana umreženost i društvene mreže izvor su *ljubomore*. Doduše, ljubomora je među sudionicima zabilježena samo kod djevojaka, dok se

<sup>4</sup> „Slabi“ korisnici pametnih telefona i komunikacijskih mreža jesu oni koji koriste pametni telefon svakih nekoliko sati, a komunikacijske mreže koriste najčešće iz pragmatičnih razloga (npr. kako bi se dogovorili kada će se naći s društvom licem u lice, zato što su materijali i novosti vezane uz školovanje dostupne na društvenim mrežama i sl.). „Jaki“ korisnici su oni koji pametni telefon i komunikacijske mreže koriste barem svakih 30 minuta, i to kako bi s prijateljima komunicirali o gotovo svemu što sačinjava njihov dan – od najtrivijalnijih događaja do najvažnijih.

mladići nisu referirali na tu emociju. Izvori ljubomore uglavnom su dopisivanje s drugim djevojkama, „lajkanje“ slika drugih djevojaka ili prijateljstvo s drugim djevojkama na Facebooku. Sudionica 7A zahtijeva opravdanje od partnera kada ostvaruje nova Facebook prijateljstva s djevojkama ili kada „lajka“ fotografije drugih djevojaka na Instagramu:

*Tipa, živcira me lajkanje drugih – ljubomorna sam. Jednom sam provjeravala poruke kad sam sumnjala. Neću prigovoriti ako followa nove cure, ali ako lajka, ću ga pitati zašto to radi... ja drugim dečkima to ne radim.*

Treći i posljednji zaključak izveden iz dubinskih intervjuva koji se odnosi na osjećaje koje učestala upotreba pametnih telefona proizvodi kod mladih jest taj da je neprestana umreženost u stanovitim okolnostima frustrirajuća. Frustraciju u mladima, a naročito onih u ljubavnim vezama, povezanu s uporabom pametnog telefona uzrokuje neprestana povezanost i razina dostupnosti na koju su mladi navikli. Preciznije govoreći, u ljubavnim su vezama partneri navikli na relativno neprestanu međusobnu dostupnost. Stoga ukoliko si partneri ne odgovore na pročitano poruku u roku od 10 do 15 minuta, javlja se frustracija i osjećaj zapostavljenosti. Sudionici intervjuva to nazivaju „sinanjem“ (od engl. *seen*) jer se po primitku i otvaranju poruke pošiljatelju na sučelju kraj poruke pojavljuje par plavih kvačica s natpisom „seen“ ili „viđeno“. Drugim riječima, smatra se teškim prijestupom i činom zanemarivanja ukoliko je primatelj poruku primio i pročitao, a da na nju nije odmah i odgovorio. Sudionica 3A tumači:

*Živcira me kad ignorira poruke. Ja ne znam je li on čorav ili kaj. Pošaljem mu dvije poruke i on mi iskomentira samo drugu poruku. Pa reko: kaj ne vidiš poruku prvu? Još me živcira kad, na primjer, on gleda TV i odgovara mi svakih 10 minuta i onda ću ja odgovarati svakih 10 minuta da ne ispadnem naporna. Jer ja znam šiknut mob kad gledam TV, a on voli pogledati film do kraja.*

S druge strane, ovako sudionik 5T opisuje koliko promptno odgovara na poruke djevojci:

*U roku od 2 minute ili manje. Jedino ako gledam film ili igram igricu – onda kažem: „čekaj malo“. Ako znam da je doma, ona isto mora odgovoriti u 2 minute, ali ako je na praksi, onda u roku od pola sata. Ako bi djevojka vidjela da sam vidio i nisam odgovorio, to bi bio ogroman bed. To se dogodilo jednom slučajno. Bio sam malo pijan i otvorio sam njenu poruku i skroz to zanemario i spremio mob u džep. Iduće jutro je bila rapsodija – „šta sam ti napravila, zašto?!“ Morao sam se iskupiti skroz.*

Osim stalne dostupnosti, prema kazivanju sudionika intervjuva, bez obzira jesu li ili nisu u ljubavnoj vezi, neprestana umreženost za mlade osobe može biti vrlo frustrirajuća s obzirom na to da iziskuje puno vremena. „Slabi“ korisnici *prima facie* nemaju problema s kvantitetom, međutim ponekad zamjećuju da im neke digitalne radnje uzimaju puno vremena. Zato sami sebe ograničavaju pokušavajući kontrolirati korištenje pametnog telefona, kao što to čini 3A: „Zapravo želim maknuti mob od sebe da se odmorim jer sam previše ovisna. Sad, ako se svađam s dečkom, onda ga stalno koristim, ali ako je sve u redu, onda ga koristim ujutro i navečer. Ovisno o situaciji.“ Ipak, i za „jake“ korisnike, poput onih u ljubavnim vezama, stalna povezanost također zna biti izvor nervoze ili stresa, i to uglavnom kod muških sudionika. Djevojke, poput sudionice 8H, izjavljuju rečenice tipa: „Volim ga slušati dok priča o sebi. To mi je uvijek zabavno“. Sudionica 6A kaže da je posebno

voljela s bivšim dečkom „(...) to kaj sam u svakom trenu znala di je. Kaj god ga trebam, tu je i mogu računati na njega“. S druge strane, sudionik 9J priznaje: „Tipa, znalo me naživcirati da mi stvarno smeta kad mi šalje šest-sedam poruka odjednom. Stalno zvoni mobitel i vibrira i to me živcira – zbreca me i to me smeta.“ Zbog visoke razine upotrebe pametnih telefona, naročito u društvene svrhe, sudionici ponekad osjećaju zamor, stoga ostavljaju važne teme ili događaje proživljene tijekom dana koje žele ispričati za susret uživo. Razlog tome je, kako kazuje sudionica 9J, ovaj: „A ljepše je licem u lice. Uživo je to lijepo. Možeš se nasmijati, emocije su drugačije, možeš zagrliti osobu i ne tipkaš u sobi 'hahahaha' – kao smiješno je. Bolje se osjećaš jednostavno.“

## RASPRAVA

Budući da je sama komunikacija glavni motiv uporabe pametnih telefona među mladim osobama (Vorderer i sur., 2016), pretpostavljeno je da mladi za vrijeme druženja licem u lice neće imati izraženu potrebu koristiti pametni telefon. Ipak, rezultati provedenih istraživanja upućuju da mladići i djevojke za vrijeme druženja licem u lice posežu za pametnim telefonima u prosjeku gotovo svakih sedam minuta. Pomoću pametnog telefona podižu intenzitet razgovora, pronalaze nove teme ili signaliziraju ostalim članovima grupe da im je dosadno. Signalizacija dosade pametnim telefonom najčešće je nenamjerna, a članovi grupe nerijetko je smatraju uvredljivom. Rezultati istraživanja indiciraju da u određenim okolnostima postoji nepisano pravilo prema kojem je uporaba pametnog telefona za vrijeme druženja licem u lice nepoželjna. To pravilo najsnažnije dolazi do izražaja pri druženju dvoje mladih jer ne postoji treći član grupe s kojim će se nastaviti interakcija u slučaju da jedan član grupe posegne za pametnim telefonom. Stoga se u grupama koje čine dva člana mobilni uređaji obično koriste „u paru“, i to u sljedećim varijacijama: a) oba se člana pridržavaju pravila i ne koriste pametne telefone i b) za oba člana pravilo ne vrijedi jer su vrlo bliski i uporabom mobitela generiraju nove teme. Alternativno, u slučaju da jedan od članova prekrši to nepisano pravilo, drugi će član iz protesta također posegnuti za pametnim telefonom. U velikim grupama sadržaj na pametnim telefonima pomaže podijeliti društvo na manje grupe, unutar kojih se zatim komunicira o zasebnim temama. Također, neki članovi velikih grupa ponekad izolirano koriste pametni telefon, bez obzira na ostale članove.

Prema iskazima sudionika dubinskih intervjua učestala upotreba pametnih telefona može se povezati s osjećajem dosade ili navike, što potvrđuju i neka istraživanja prema kojima upravo dosada služi kao prediktor razine problematične upotrebe pametnih telefona (Elhai i sur., 2018b). S obzirom na važnu ulogu vršnjačke komunikacije među mladima koja se odvija na *chat*-aplikacijama i društvenim mrežama, sudionici ovog istraživanja potvrdili su da bi gubitak pametnog telefona u njima izazvao stres, tjeskobu te osjećaj „da im nešto nedostaje, kao da su goli“. Takvi rezultati govore u prilog postojećim znanstvenim nalazima da osobe koje imaju izraženu potrebu za izgrađivanjem društvenih veza snažnije osjećaju FOMO (Wang i sur., 2018; Przybylski i sur., 2013). Međutim, treba još jednom istaknuti kako rezultati dubinskih intervjua upućuju na to da se FOMO, kao strah povezan s vršnjačkim aktivnostima, ne nalazi među glavnim uzrocima korištenja pametnog telefona

za vrijeme društvenih interakcija licem u lice. Ipak, prema iskazima sudionika intervjuja, pametni telefon predstavlja iznimno važan uređaj u životima mladih kada je riječ o održavanju odnosa s prijateljima i stoga se posezanje za pametnim telefonom u svakodnevici mladih može povezati sa željom da se izbjegnu osjećaji izoliranosti i straha od propuštanja. Nadalje, neprekidna umreženost stresna je za mlade zato što im ponekad oduzima osjećaj kontrole nad vlastitim vremenom. Također, istraživanje je pokazalo da razina pristupačnosti uvjetuje osjećaj obaveze kad je riječ o brzini odgovaranja, kao što sugeriraju Lisa Mai i sur. (2015). Neovisno o tome radi li se o ljubavnoj vezi ili prijateljstvu, pripadnici generacije Z zbog naviknutosti na stalnu dostupnost – kako sebe, tako i drugih – očekuju brzo i promptno odgovaranje unutar perioda od nekoliko desetaka minuta. Narочito je važno je li poruka viđena ili nije. Rezultati istraživanja idu u prilog tvrdnji da „digitalni bonton“ podrazumijeva momentalan odgovor na viđenu poruku (Mai i sur., 2015), u suprotnom je neodgovaranje moguće shvatiti kao uvredu. Hua Su (2015) ističe da djevojke u vezama smatraju kako mladići imaju obavezu odgovoriti na njihove poruke u kraćem roku nego u suprotnom slučaju. Ipak, prema ovom istraživanju, kada su direktno upitane o tome, djevojke ističu da imaju ista očekivanja od sebe i od svoji partnera, dok se iz anegdota i drugih izvještaja može zaključiti suprotno. U svakom slučaju, djevojke se pokazuju osjetljivijima na vrijeme odgovora na poruke od strane njihovih partnera. Zakašnjela ili odgođena reakcija partnera može se protumačiti kao izbjegavanje, nepoštovanje ili kao davanje prioriteta nečem drugom. Uz to, pametni telefon može poticati ljubomoru u vezama.

## OGRANIČENJA STUDIJE

Nalaze koji su prikazani u ovom radu valja sagledati u kontekstu činjenice da je riječ o eksplorativnoj studiji provedenoj posredstvom kvalitativnih metoda istraživanja na ograničenom broju sudionika istraživanja. Kao takva ona je ograničena, kako s obzirom na postavljene ciljeve istraživanja tako i s obzirom na njezin spoznajni doseg. Naime, različiti socijalni, psihološki, kulturni i ekonomski fenomeni koji se mogu povezati s korištenjem suvremenih informacijsko-komunikacijskih uređaja među mladima znatno su brojniji od onih na koje se fokusiralo provedeno istraživanje. I drugo, kvalitativne metode istraživanja ne omogućuju ustanovljivanje kauzalnih ili korelacijskih veza, kao ni generaliziranje nalaza istraživanja. Stoga podatci koje smo prikupili posredstvom metoda promatranja i dubinskih intervjuja prije svega naznačuju moguće smjerove u izgradnji okvira interpretacije istraživnog fenomena. Smatramo da oni predstavljaju moguću polaznu točku za razumijevanje nekih od značajnih motiva koji potiču mlade na upotrebu mobilnih telefona u interakcijama licem u lice, pri čemu istovremeno ostavljaju i prostor za dodatne interpretacije, ali i za alternativne istraživačke smjerove. Shodno tome, predočene nalaze držimo prikladnom građom za postavljanje radnih hipoteza koje bi mogle poslužiti kao polazište za provođenje kvantitativnih empirijskih studija šireg opsega, a s ciljem njihove egzaktnije empirijske provjere, ali i proširenja istraživačkog fokusa na one aspekte istraživnog fenomena koji su u ovoj studiji izostavljeni.

## ZAKLJUČAK

Na temelju promatranja socijalnih interakcija mladih licem u lice i provedenih dubinskih intervjuva moguće je zaključiti da mladi imaju naviku koristiti pametne telefone za vrijeme druženja kako bi „premostili“ pad intenziteta komunikacije ili generirali neku novu temu. Dakle, bilo da su sami ili u grupi mladi koriste pametni telefon kako bi pobjegli od dosade. Također, mladi – naročito u manjim grupama – često nastoje ne posezati za pametnim telefonom kako ostali članovi grupe ne bi pomislili da im je dosadno, s obzirom na to da bi se to moglo protumačiti uvredljivim. Iznimke su vrlo povezane osobe i „jaki“ korisnici pametnih telefona. Na temelju odgovora sudionika intervjuva o konstantnoj povezanosti zaključujemo da su njezine posljedice, u najmanju ruku, dvojake. S jedne strane, ona po definiciji vodi u osjećaj povezanosti ili kohezije među mladima, s obzirom na to da – zbog iznimno velike pristupačnosti – oni više puta dnevno razmjenjuju poruke o velikom broju tema koje variraju po važnosti, što je, u konačnici, kohezivno i zabavno. S druge strane, zaključeno je da mladi zbog neprestane umreženosti osjećaju FOMO, tj. strah od propuštanja. Osobe koje pokazuju izraženu sklonost druženju sklonije su tome strahu, ali ih ne opterećuje što im učestala upotreba pametnog telefona oduzima puno vremena. Drugim riječima, mladi komunikacijom putem pametnog telefona postižu koheziju unutar grupe, osjećaj pripadnosti i zabave, a gubitak pametnog telefona uzrokovao bi gubitak onih socijalnih dobitaka koji se stječu umreženošću. Stoga možemo zaključiti da se FOMO javlja kao posljedica važnosti pametnog telefona za društveni život mladih, ovisno o naravi komunikacijskih navika. Ono što je zajedničko svim mladima jest da neprestana umreženost ponekad stvara psihološki pritisak zbog visokog očekivanja da će promptno odgovarati na poruke na *chat*-aplikacijama, što mladi nastoje ispuniti kako bi održali dobre odnose. Za mlade u vezi neprestana povezanost može biti osobito stresna, s tim da djevojke izraženije pokazuju manju toleranciju na „zakašnjenje“ odgovaranje na poruke te ljubomoru povezanu s aktivnostima svojeg partnera na društvenim mrežama u odnosu na druge djevojke.

Uočene i opisane obrasce korištenja pametnih telefona u socijalnim interakcijama pripadnika generacije Z, prema našem mišljenju, moguće je tematizirati i iz perspektive kontinuiranog povećanja interakcijskih kapaciteta suvremenih informacijsko-komunikacijskih aplikacija. Ujedno, time se otvara mogućnost da se i o generaciji Z, koja je za potrebe ovog rada primarno određena kao dobna kohorta, govori kao o medijskoj generaciji. Tu mogućnost temeljimo na Bolinovoj konstataciji prema kojoj „specifična generacijska medijska kultura predstavlja odgovor na objektivni medijski krajolik dostupan u formativnim godinama osobe“ (Bolin, 2014, prema Čuvalo i Peruško, 2017). Iz toga proizlazi i to da je u promišljanju uočenih obrazaca korištenja mobilnih telefona potrebno u obzir uzeti i pretpostavku o utjecaju medijskog krajolika unutar kojeg se odvijao proces učenja o mogućnostima koje pružaju pojedine interakcijske performanse pametnih telefona u socijalnim interakcijama licem u lice. Riječ je o medijskom krajoliku u smislu društveno prisutnog spleta objektivnih komunikacijsko-tehnoloških mogućnosti, dostupnih medijskih i komunikacijskih sredstava, neformalnih komunikacijskih praksi i komunikacijskih normi, a koje jačaju interakcijske kapacitete suvremenih informacijsko-komunikacijskih tehnologija i stvaraju pretpostavke za njihovo korištenje u svakodnevnim socijalnim interakci-

jama. Drukčije rečeno, detektirane i opisane obrasce korištenja mobilnih telefona u socijalnim interakcijama pripadnika generacije Z vjerojatno je teško odvojiti od specifičnosti medijskog, tehnološkog i kulturnog konteksta koji promiče njihovo korištenje kao specifičnih „interakcijskih alata“. Shodno tome, smatramo da je teorijski opravdano generaciju Z razmatrati i sukladno konceptu medijske generacije. Konačna empirijska verifikacija ove tvrdnje ostaje kao zadatak za neko buduće istraživanje.

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# CONSTANT CONNECTION AND FEAR OF MISSING OUT IN YOUTH'S EVERYDAY FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION

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Sebastijan Ivasović :: Ivan Burić

**SUMMARY** *The main aim of this explorative research paper was to discover frequency, patterns, and motives of smartphone usage by Generation Z (people born in the late 1990s or the early 2000s) during their face-to-face interaction with a view to exploring the need for constant connection and correlated fear of missing out. For this purpose, the authors of the paper conducted in-depth interviews and an observation in Zagreb. As the results indicate, young people use smartphones during their face-to-face interactions in order to bridge the fall of dialogue intensity and generate new topics, while usage dynamics varies in correlation with the size of the group and the quality of friendship. Additionally, it is discovered that youth's constant connection is a habit – especially for the ones in a love relationship. Constant connection is, in general, the result of boredom and desire for fun, which can lead to stress and a fear of missing out. Such a fear manifests itself in situations when young people lose their smartphones, which makes them feel "cut off from the world". Also, due to high communication expectations generated by constant connectedness, young people feel the pressure of quick communication, which leads to stress.*

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## KEYWORDS

CONSTANT CONNECTION, FEAR OF MISSING OUT, SMARTPHONE, GENERATION Z

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# GENERATION Z JOURNALISTS: WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THEM IN TIMES OF MEDIA DEGRADATION?

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**ABSTRACT** *This article presents the results of a research-creation project undertaken in Brazil during a period of thirty months to assess how journalists of the so-called Generation Z handle emerging technologies and create specific narratives on converging media platforms. The study included 125 university students on a multi-platform journalistic creation project subject to the methods of Paulo Freire's theory. The results show that Gen Zers establish writing parameters that avoid complex browsing and are based on a virtual newsroom and multitasking. New journalistic models to be led by the students who participated in the study will probably rely on an organizational setting characterized by horizontal decision-making processes and more flexible, democratic production. Immersed in the context of imminent democratic backsliding in Brazil, research participants defined their news agenda as a form of contesting hegemonic discourses.*

## KEYWORDS

GENERATION Z, CONVERGENCE, RESEARCH-CREATION, TRANSMEDIA NARRATIVES,  
VIRTUAL NEWSROOMS, MULTI-PLATFORM

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## INTRODUCTION

The current erosion of the media's historical and structural power (Waisbord, 2018; Starr, 2019; Reese, 2019) brings to the fore the need to question the training of future journalists. What can be expected from professionals of the so-called 'Generation Z', a population cohort characterized as 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001), people who have experienced the context of media convergence and narrative hybridization since birth?

Despite the influential opinion on how the use of technology characterizes this group – also called the 'Net Generation' by Don Tapscott (1998) – there is much controversy as to what these youths' different skills in the use of Internet and digital resources actually are (Bennett *et al.*, 2008; Gallardo-Echenique *et al.*, 2015; Bullen and Morgan, 2011). How transformative can such skills (if real) be for the future practice of journalism?

Much research has been done on the transformation caused by digital media in journalism, including investigations on the impact of fake news and press credibility (Fletcher and Park, 2017; Citrin and Stocker, 2018; Lazer *et al.*, 2018). Alternative pedagogical practices are proposed so that future professionals can proficiently wield new technologies. However, little light has been shed on how these young professionals use emerging technologies in their first journalistic endeavors while still in training.

This article analyzes the experience from a research-creation project which included the participation of 125 Brazilian students majoring in Journalism to produce the *Campus Multiplatform* project, as described in the following. The premises of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1974, 1985, 1993) support the qualitative research process, which unveiled these young undergraduates' abilities and perceptions about journalistic work on multiple platforms. Research was based on an inductive investigation which did not consider the students to be tech-savvy simply because they are immersed in a context of accelerated technological development. On the contrary, this text intends to describe some practices that were empirically observed during a journalistic training process and only partially confirmed assumptions of the digital native discourse.

In this study, context matters greatly. Under constant attacks over the past few years, especially in the current climate of political unrest and transition of power to the far-right in the country (Hunter and Power, 2019; Daly, 2019; Jinkings *et al.*, 2016; Albuquerque and Meneses, 2017; Souza, 2016; Scartezini, 2016), the Brazilian press has sought forms and spaces of resistance. Among these spaces, digital alternative news media have become an important means to contest misinformation, particularly when the government's political communication strategy disqualifies the traditional press. This complex sociocultural context often leads Journalism majors to question their future in the market and their role in society, which includes technical and political challenges.

The current scenario in Brazil marks a specific chapter of the conservative, polarized wave that is invading western democracies through social media strategies (Fitzgerald, 2018; Albrecht *et al.*, 2019). In this context, Generation Z – people born as of 1997,

according to Michael Dimock (2019) – is also targeted by the alt-right discourse. In the West, movements on this pole of the political spectrum are proud to declare themselves as the “growing voice of Generation Z” (Salazar, 2018: 2).

At the same time, press conglomerates all over the world have suffered to adapt to media convergence. In Brazil and other countries, many digital channels have become a platform for citizen journalism (Bruns and Highfield, 2012) and a career alternative for journalists affected by the economic erosion of traditional media outlets. These channels also started to develop a counter-hegemonic narrative (Couldry and Curran, 2003), turning their criticism toward conservative state policies and the advancement of far-right ideology. Therefore, being able to navigate through digital media is not only a matter of the technical capacity to communicate with an online audience, but also a necessary condition for defending essential values of journalism, such as plurality and a watchdog stance towards political power.

For students who are currently majoring in Journalism, it is assumed that their habits in digital media channels are already naturalized. Notwithstanding, Sue Bennett *et al.* (2008), among other authors, question this assumption, arguing that there is not enough evidence to suggest that intrinsic digital fluency is the result of only a supposed high consumption of technology. As such, it is not possible to presume how students will use online media for news production, mainly within a context of unbalanced values that traditionally support journalism in Brazil and elsewhere. In addition, the social and economic inequality that pervades Brazilian society is also reflected in the context of public higher education institutions, which means that different levels of media literacy and access to technological resources influence how journalists-to-be tend to maneuver digital media.

Therefore, questions remain unexplored. What is in fact normalized among these Generation Z journalists, and how do they execute journalistic work in a digital environment, even in a training process?

Based on a qualitative investigation and through an innovative form of inquiry – namely, the research-creation methodology – this article aims to elucidate a specific research question:

RQ1: What are the editorial, technical, and organizational precepts that guide Generation Z journalists-to-be in building transmedia multi-platform news media?

In the following section, the paper will debate the transformations that journalism has faced and its interfaces on social media, focusing specifically on the effects of these transformations in Brazil and for young journalists of Generation Z. The subsequent section describes the research methodology, and the final section discusses the main findings, along with the limitations, of the study.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE

Research on the impact of social media for newsmaking has grown rapidly over the last few years. Among the research subjects, the most common are changes in the relationship between journalists and the public, pointing to trends indicating greater interaction (Holton *et al.*, 2016); the de-ritualization of news consumption (Livingstone, 2004); the transformation of traditional media as a result of the rise of new media which are natively digital (Bivens, 2008); the use of artificial intelligence and algorithms in news distribution (Bucher, 2012; Latzer *et al.*, 2014); updated professional practices and newsroom settings (Robinson, 2011); emerging values for news selection (Trilling *et al.*, 2017); and considerations about professional ethics (Deuze and Yeshua, 2001).

These shifts have prompted many studies about the professional identity of journalists and the meaning of the profession in the face of the cultural mediatization induced by new ways of accessing, producing, and circulating information (Mellado and Van Dalen, 2014). The current transformations in the field are recognized as structural and they demand a review of society's relationship with information, trust, and civic participation (Peters and Broersma, 2012).

Social media and digital platforms were previously characterized as 'alternative news media' (Bruns and Highfield, 2012) or as an escape route for journalists facing the press crisis. Over time, the view that online and offline platforms are not contrary but complementary forces has prevailed. Despite the clear differences in normative and pragmatic requirements between social and traditional media, the journalism scenario envisaged the rise of digital news outlets (Bell *et al.*, 2017). This adaptation has led to more interaction between news producers and their audiences on open online platforms (Bruns, 2008; Deuze, 2007), with journalists or non-professional independent newsmakers creating their own transmedia narratives (Jenkins *et al.*, 2014).

The deontology of journalism has been reclaimed as we face the need for a clear distinction between professionalism and the use of social media as a display for laypeople's opinions (Domingo and Heinonen, 2008). It is not enough to exhibit ethical criteria and the values of journalism to mark this distinction. Technological abilities for using social media have become indispensable for professional journalists. Hyperlinks, videos, photos, tagging sources and people involved in the news story, or the use of hashtags are important for boosting visibility (Hermida, 2010). These digital tools have become necessary for disseminating content in social networks but are also already crucial to the transparency of the newsmaking process (Karlsson, 2011). Journalists working with digital media have now been laden with the need to shape their content so as to gain attention and trust in an enormous universe of daily data.

Technical leaps have also imposed ethical dilemmas (Deuze and Yeshua, 2001) related to the process of gathering information, the use of content, and the right to source confidentiality; hypertextuality and the use of links with access to different platforms over which the journalist has no control; multi-platform practices and multimedia narratives

that affect the integrity of a story; and the detrimental effects to accuracy that come with immediacy. The deontological codes that rule journalism are seldom updated to include principles which are appropriate for a digital environment (Días-Campo and Segado-Boj, 2015), thus underlining the need for self-regulation among professionals (González-Esteban *et al.*, 2011).

Given the lack of a normative reference for the profession, teaching digital journalism at universities grows in importance, since it is left with the task of imbuing professionals with self-critical capacities and stimulating creative skills to improve journalistic narratives.

Brazilian students around the ages of 18 to 22 are part of a generation born at a time where digital technologies had already been developed. What, then, characterizes the relationship between younger generations and news media?

### Generational Differences

As defined by the *Pew Research Center* (Dimock, 2019), Generation Z encompasses those who completed 22 years of age in 2019. Therefore, students currently enrolled in Brazilian higher education are an integral part of this demographic cohort, which is characterized by a potential technological immersion through mobile devices from an early age. Barbara Combes (2009) questions the automatic acceptance of the attributes that hypothetically characterize Gen Z, as proposed by native digital theorists and which became dominant both in grey and academic literature (Smith, 2012). For instance, the belief that youths from this generation possess intuitive knowledge useful for finding information on the web only because they have been exposed to technology since birth is clearly denied by Combes (2009). On the contrary, she finds that students do not know how to use more sophisticated search engines and rely on doubtful sources of information. Based on such findings, Mark Bullen and Tannis Morgan (2011) propose to change the label from 'digital natives' to 'digital learners'.

This controversy does not deny that technology has a huge influence on daily life and students' behavior. The *ICT Kids Online Brazil Research* (BISC, 2017) showed that 85% of Brazilian infants and teenagers (9-17 years old) are connected to the Internet, and 93% of them are online through their smartphones. Most of them use the Internet mainly for social media (73%). Fifty-one percent of the interviewees between the ages of 9 and 17 use their phones to consume news, and twelve percent use the Internet to discuss politics or the country's problems. Nevertheless, access to these resources does not imply a proficient or a conscious use of them.

In other parts of the world, such as Western Europe, people between the ages of 19 and 29 are twice as likely to be informed via social media instead of through TV news. Among the youngest generation, 73% claim to consume online news at least once a day. However, access to information is not correlated with a stronger connection between these young respondents and the support to democracy (Foa and Mounk, 2016).

Data on consumer habits and access to online information among younger generations are pivotal for journalistic practices. In the field of journalism, however, there is still a feeling of division between 'old' and 'new' practices (Hedman and Djerf-Pierre, 2013; Colson and Heinderyckx, 2008). The divide between 'traditional journalists' and 'interaction experts' is also related to how these different professionals identify the possibilities for recovering trust in journalism. While the former believe this process comes with strengthening journalistic authority – via stronger accountability – the latter see more promise in the horizontal relationship between producers and consumers of news (Zahay *et al.*, 2019).

All this data must be considered within a context of a political offensive against the democratic role of the press. After all, new professionals are on their way into the labor market and face distrust towards journalistic practices and may also rely on technology to produce content. This is an explosive combination in our day and shall mark the Gen Zers' course of action in the field. This is why it is important to understand how (and if) Journalism majors use technology and combine it with the normative principles of the profession, such as plurality and accuracy.

## METHODOLOGY

This article presents an analysis resulting from a thirty-month long research-creation project developed between 2016 and 2019. The project was named *Campus Multiplatform* and involved Journalism majors (N=125) from the University of Brasilia.

According to Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuk (2012), research-creation is an emerging form of qualitative research that challenges conventional formats of scientific production, since it does not abide by pre-defined models which segregate the roles of researcher and the people under analysis and by data collection tools deemed to be neutral and objective. In contrast, the research-creation methodology experiments with a new aesthetic, relying on different formats of artistic production (text, audio, image, dance, *etc.*), lively human interactions, and multimedia texts. This very experimentation produces new knowledge that qualifies for scientific testing in the humanities and social sciences.

Research-creation is suitable for experiences with new media and new languages that involve creative processes. Developed in Canada in 2003 "to encourage hybrid forms of activity promising to capture for research the creative energies of artists" (Manning and Massumi, 2014: 84), research-creation has expanded its application to different fields of knowledge. The methodology was defined by the *Canada Council for the Arts* as "a part of an investigation that involves trying things out, as opposed to gathering data, as it is often conceived in traditional academia" (Chapman and Sawchuk, 2012: 9). It also differs from the research-action methodology in that the final objective is not to encourage political or participatory engagement but to observe a creative process after opening up a platform for experimentation.

Chapman and Sawchuck (2012: 15-21) identify four sub-categories of research-creation stemming from the modulation of the two words composing the term: 'research-for-creation', 'research-from-creation', 'creative presentations of research', and 'creation-as-research'. This project with students from the University of Brasilia proved to be a case of 'creation-as-research', although, in practice, the experience was an amalgamation of the four categories. Text creation, images, and other hybrid content types that were developed as a pedagogical practice were previously informed by collective research on the literature for multimedia journalism and platform convergence. In turn, this content generated data about the relationship between a new generation of journalists and their digital journalistic narrative. Consequently, these analyses may also encourage further experimentations among young professionals in an "interweaving of theory and practice" (Chapman and Sawchuk, 2012: 20). If that is the case, the research becomes a creation in itself.

The process of creation and critical reflection with these Journalism students was also combined with discussions in 'culture circles', as proposed by Paulo Freire's methodology (1974, 1985, 1993). The work consisted of in-person and online debates – via instant messaging apps in mobile devices – to discuss and investigate the students' thematic universe (Freire, 1974, 1993). Students debated the agenda to be reported on and at the university, constantly contemplating newsmaking and collective practices to be distributed through multiple news platforms.

In Brasilia, students had weekly discussions mediated by a professor. These meetings were organized to set the agenda and discuss language and potential criticism for the material produced for the *Campus* project. At these gatherings, students discussed their views about topics regarding university matters and new media types to explore while keeping the normative principles of journalism in mind. In these experiences, students laid out their own reading of their generation as consumers and producers of news. From these debates, it was possible to identify 'generative themes', that is, matters that touch on these young professionals' background in their journalistic experience with emerging technologies.

These exercises involved five student groups, of which 60% were women and 40% were men, mostly (78.3%) within the age range between 18 and 24 years old. Following the profile of the university's population, 39.6% were white students, 36.7% were brown, and 10.2% were black.

The students' production was compiled around the *Campus Multiplatform* project as an experiment with multimedia journalistic narratives, as detailed below. Their discussions in the culture circles were recorded in a research diary. The main topics that emerged in each group were categorized in a panel that also included the observed practices throughout the phase of content production by the students. The practices were grouped into four processes: choosing the agenda to be reported, searching for information, defining the emphasis for the writings, and following along with the audience's responses. Since the

focus of the research-creation project was on digital media, the tech resources used by the students for each process were also registered.

In the news production stage, every student in the study responded to a semi-structured interview. The initial responses were then compared to three reports: a technical one made by the Editorial Board with an assessment of the project and recommendations for subsequent groups, a self report produced by each group, and questionnaires filled out individually with data on each student's experience.

Analysis of the reports and the five panels (one for each group) fell under four final categories that were inductively obtained from the observations recorded throughout the thirty months of the project. The categories were (1) the organizing model (how the students coordinated their tasks in order to produce collectively), (2) content priorities (what parameters defined the agenda to be reported), (3) technical orientation (concerns about the tech resources to be used and why these choices were made), and (4) deontological claims. The main findings are described below.

## THE CAMPUS MULTIPLATFORM PROJECT

*Campus Multiplatform* is a laboratory for digital narratives employed by the *Journalism School of the University of Brasilia*. Students produced content for seven platforms: a website and an app developed by the project, a *Facebook* page, an *Instagram* profile, a *Twitter* profile, a *WhatsApp* group, and a *YouTube* channel.

*Campus* news was formatted into different narratives so as to reach out to different groups, which were segmented according to their chosen platform. Without making use of algorithms or Artificial Intelligence tools, the project took advantage of the innate characteristics of each platform and other codes that are permanently and invisibly working in the web in order to bolster views. On all platforms, the reader can speak up and take control of the news in order to create his or her own transmedia narratives (Jenkins, 2008, 2011; Jenkins *et al.*, 2014; Scolari, 2011, 2017; Castells, 1999, 2012).

The editorial principles guiding the *Campus* project were based on citizen journalism (Traquina, 2003, 2005), aimed toward a virtual environment of democratic deliberation that, instead of vying for neutrality, was partial to citizens' interests and not to formal political or economic institutions.

In organizational terms, *Campus* horizontalized hierarchies of a classic newsroom by promoting permanent internal deliberations to make collegiate and plural decisions. Also, the project was always open to interventions from its audience.

Another focus of *Campus Multiplatform* was the production of content on smartphones (pictures, videos, audio bits, editing, posting/distribution, *etc.*) and for smartphones. This focus included permanent communication among all project participants via instant

messaging apps. These arrangements led to the functioning of a virtual newsroom, which can be defined as:

*(...) A place in cyberspace where journalists work sufficiently and synergistically without the need for a shared physical space. Thus, paradoxically, it can be said that journalistic production is dispersed, by not gathering professionals in the same physical space, but centralized and/or coordinated at the same time, since it operates in a "place" in cyberspace that also becomes the end destination of the produced content, thus where the content is processed and from where it is distributed for consumption (Barcellos et al., 2014: 85).*

Media experimentation by the young journalists in each semester was divided into three phases: 1) debates in culture circles, 2) creative production, and 3) critical analysis of the content.

The study was developed in five semester-long cycles, with a prior survey of different media platforms, which was followed by content creation adapted to the possibilities of each channel. In the very first phase, culture circles were carried out with students having a discussion about digital communication. Relevant topics related to journalistic multi-platform and transmedia production were also debated, such as the use of smartphones for content production, news distribution and consumption, journalists' actual role in society, and the format of newsrooms.

After the debate phase, the students began producing news intermittently for approximately forty days. These pieces were produced and published in one or more platforms, with specific narratives, and according to a publishing schedule based on the audience's characteristics and the story to be told. It was always up to the students to identify the appropriate topics, spaces, and social-technical networks for posting the content.

Each platform used by *Campus* reported information about and to the community of the *University of Brasilia*, a public higher education institution established in 1962. One of the largest in Brazil, the University has four campuses around the nation's capital and comprehends around 55,000 people among students, faculty, and staff. Amid the very diverse topics reported, the students were bound to this community's interests, including news about higher education policies, public incentives for research, cultural events, safety and transportation conditions at the campuses, building infrastructure and improvements, failures in the facilities' regular functioning, scholarships, political disputes in the student union, and so on.

At the end of the first semester of 2019, the *Campus Instagram* profile had 617 publications and 2,425 followers. On *Twitter*, there were 545,700 impressions and 2,100 retweets, and 6,300 contents had been "favorited". One hundred eleven pieces were published on *Facebook*, amassing 4,620 likes. Forty-seven pieces had circulated on the website, and 59 were released on *WhatsApp*, where 6,043 messages were also sent (5,134 delivered and 3,017 read). The *Campus* app and the *YouTube* account are still in experimental use and thus without a statistical record.

## Entrepreneurial Vision

Students were oriented by the dispute for an audience – and approval of their stories with likes and shares – via the systematic use of hashtags linked to thematic keywords. It was a constant concern for the participants. Therefore, they took advantage of the fact that platforms have mechanisms to aggregate users by their interests and habits in order to offer customized news to their readership (Pariser, 2012; Barcellos *et al.*, 2017).

However, this strategy did not ensure that the public would identify that *Campus* was, in fact, *one* media producer acting on many platforms. The receiver could be reached only by isolated news in different locations. Students then assessed that a larger perception of unity and better 'branding' would bolster public recognition of *Campus* as multi-platform media. The need to gain recognition as a more sophisticated journalistic product was interpreted partially as a natural drive for visibility but also as a consequence of the prior critical debates.

As alternatives for minimizing the perceived fragmentation of *Campus* by the audience, students suggested some tactics related to typically commercial, entrepreneurial, or marketing concerns, such as the use of logos and color patterns on all platforms, and chose a 'mascot' for the project (a seal<sup>1</sup>). Beyond that, hyperlinks were created as bridges between platforms, although the full story was presented in each space with its own characteristics. To make the project's unity explicit, the team made regular advertising and educational campaigns (theatrical performances, printed materials, press office actions, videos, digital multimedia pieces for social networks, *etc.*).

These initiatives emphasized the project's single identity, which allowed it to be considered an actual multi-platform journalistic product. The students also proposed a daily live show named *Campus Café* – broadcasted every morning on *Facebook* – and to develop an app that aggregated the content scattered throughout many platforms. In the app, editors alternated between the tasks of posting headlines from different platforms and promoting previews of pieces that were still in development.

## Work organization

To organize their production, students created a virtual newsroom model and workflow by defining functions for all the participants. They sought a horizontal organizational model with few hierarchical divisions and no isolated chief positions. Each semester, an Editorial Board was responsible for establishing collegial decisions, instead of a monocratic approach with a sole editor.

The choice for more participative forms of decision-making was made for different reasons, with the intention to minimize the impact of individual mistakes, to spark creativity, to enable synergic processes of collective intelligence, and, most importantly, to establish an environment for permanent debate.

<sup>1</sup> Traditionally in Brazil, young and inexperienced journalists who have just arrived in a newsroom are fondly called 'seals' by older journalists.

The virtual newsroom was mostly coordinated via smartphones, allowing continuous content production and contact among teams, with no physical or work hour constraints. Through messaging groups, decisions and news coverage also took place collectively. Other tools such as spreadsheets for task management and the sharing of image, video, audio, and text files were accessed through the web.

The agenda to be reported by the students came from reporters' observations and creativity and from the information collected in University-related groups on social networks, the University's official communications, regional mainstream media, and many others.

## DISCUSSION

As many other members of their age range, project participants showed familiarity with technologies available in digital networks and used them proficiently to produce news for *Campus Multiplatform's* different channels. However, the analysis demonstrated that the students' use of technological resources in favor of a well-oriented journalistic production was dependent on prior knowledge of good and bad practices in digital media. The students' digital aptitudes facilitated the creative, entrepreneurial freedom needed to take advantage of the net platforms in order to inform the university community. Nonetheless, these skills were not automatically adjusted to the normative principles of journalism, such as the plurality of voices, fact-checking, and some legal requirements. On the contrary, technical skills needed to be shaped beforehand by discussions based on theoretical frameworks and practical experiences with the use of the Internet (topics that were debated by the groups in the culture circles). Without them, the transmedia narratives probably would not have been applied efficiently.

Therefore, we may claim that traditional journalistic processes and techniques are prerogatives for producing news on different digital platforms, which puts the groups in the category of 'digital learners' and not simply 'digital natives'.

With the exception of the group responsible for the first semester cycle (2016), the reporters decided that they should not be restricted to one particular channel but to produce for different platforms, which we assessed as a willingness to navigate among multiple and complementary narratives. Groups demonstrated their ability to multitask and to adapt content to different channels.

Among the practices for adapting resources and narratives, the groups were quite partial to the use of smartphones for their journalistic production, often resorting to apps and tools freely available on social network websites. Participants only opted for more traditional equipment if and when they anticipated higher technical standards than those enabled by mobile phones. Therefore, the virtual and mobile newsroom model, in addition to working with the innate resources of smartphones, proved to be viable in this practice.

*Campus's* seven platforms published news for a segmented public. For each one, students decided to provide all the information needed to understand the piece in a single page. This decision had to do with the public's increasingly reduced time for reading. It demonstrated that participants were led by a certain economy of browsing; therefore, they attempted to save the audience's time and attention by avoiding the use of multiple links and different navigational schemes so as to get the whole story in a plain piece. The option to concentrate whole narratives on the same platform and web page indicated that these students tried to prevent the fragmentation of a story in different spaces. Furthermore, the decision to save 'clicks' was directly related to Brazil's social context, as transitioning through different web pages tends to be slow due to the poor quality of Internet connection. A better connection is expensive mainly in mobile devices, which leads receptors to avoid spending data packages.

In sum, the decisions made by these young journalists pointed to three clear criteria for news production: a) simple information flow which favors wholeness to the reported facts, thus converging one story to a single platform; b) narrative singularity, producing specific content to one channel instead of constructing a narrative invariably applicable to all platforms at once; c) mobile production with resources that are common to both the public and journalists.

Editorially, students chose topics of public relevance with a humanitarian approach, clearly opting for citizen journalism (Traquina, 2003; 2005) as their professional deontological standpoint. This choice was also based on their experience in a university environment. The participants planned and executed the presentation of news pieces with these characteristics to engage in a dialogue with their audience. This was not properly a rational choice but an inherent ingredient to their professional practice. Accordingly, we identified a fourth criterion orienting their newsmaking: proximity to their public as an intrinsic aspect of the profession, indicating their view that a story is not "done" at the end of journalistic production but is permanently open to the receiver's response.

Observing the daily production routine, it was possible to identify a tension among the reporters that did not subside after posting a story. Instead, it was sustained with the task of responding to each message they received from their readership. In some cases, the production cycle renewed at that moment. By interacting with the audience, certain pieces were reformatted and new topics and agendas emerged, which reinitiated the production and content distribution process.

Reporters interacted with the audience in different ways, such as via an e-mail address and a *Whatsapp* number (rarely used by the audience). However, the spaces for comments in *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *Twitter* posts really became a point of contact between the newsroom and the readers.

The students considered the number of likes, post shares, and comments in the platform as measures of the audience's interests, motivating either the extended coverage of a certain topic or its interruption, as well as the best time and platform to post a story.

In almost every posted story, the readers showed their interest by tagging a 'friend' in the comments, which means suggesting the story to someone else. The students responded to every comment. Oftentimes, the readers asked for more information about the story and tagged other 'friends'.

With this practice, proximity to readers was consolidated as an ethical demand. As a result, a journalist's responsiveness to their public has become essential.

As for organizational management, the project was characterized by discussions and dialectic processes through every step of the way. The students decided that functions should follow a horizontal and circular setting that could facilitate every member's inclusion in deliberations over the approach toward the topics to be covered. Furthermore, it also allowed for shared responsibilities in decision-making, especially when it came to editorial and ethical standards.

Deliberations could be categorized as face-to-face and virtual (synchronous and asynchronous), which are either encompassing or specific. Students exhibited an inclination toward discussions, arguments, and collective decision-making over the fulfillment of group tasks. The openness of Generation Z journalists-to-be toward deliberated decisions indicates their acceptance of horizontal organizational models in companies and communication groups.

Preference for mobile resources was not a mark of a hypothetically tech-savvy generation but mainly a need imposed by the students' context in place. Given the sprawling urban centers around Brasilia and the inefficient public transportation system in this metropolitan region, the use of online resources was a strategy against the difficult commute to the university. In any case, this practice at *Campus* attests that this management model is viable, since it allowed a shared news production and maintained online collaboration, while ethical principles were constantly checked with the readiness of digital resources. Although this option proved to be viable for alternative production, it also evidenced some insecurity among students when they had to make editorial decisions.

In technical terms, the virtual production process enabled immediate responses to journalistic demands via real time coverage, news reports, and other types of pieces, while it also facilitated a balanced distribution of tasks.

Difficulties observed in this study relate more to the students' inexperience with management and human resources and with deontological and editorial impasses. It underscores that the youth's access to technology alone is not nearly enough to induce a diverse, responsible, and creative journalistic production, in addition to the fact that the skills for maneuvering technology are not an intrinsic attribute common to all Journalism majors or members of a certain generation.

## CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

On average, the Generation Z students of the *University of Brasilia* who were part of the *Campus* project showed spontaneity in their use of the most common communication technologies available to produce stories on different digital platforms. If they are taught how to elaborate traditional journalistic narratives (print media, radio, and television) and if they know the corollaries of the profession, they readily become dexterous in the use of apps, mobile tools, and devices to create different forms of content which are non-fragmented, responsive to their audience and subject to critical analysis from their peers and audience. Moreover, they were capable of using information systems to act as their platform for quick, virtualized news distribution. These characteristics match the current digital age of journalism, where impermanence supersedes the traditional production and narrative methods of mass media.

The way in which these students made decisions may indicate a trend toward a change in established and rigid organizational models in media companies. These Gen Zers easily incorporated flexibility and virtual deliberation. This flexible format enabled the groups to engage in diverse multi-platform production that reaches an audience scattered across many channels. However, the confirmation of a general trend in this direction can only serve as a hypothesis here, as this was only a case study within the context of a university.

Without rigid narrative formats and with the fragmentation of media in cyberspace, there are two essential traits characterizing the young journalists' relationship with emerging media technology in this case. On the one hand, they proved their capability for innovation and creativity in the use of technological resources. On the other hand, they demonstrate hesitation as to how to use these resources according to the corollaries of journalism, which was deepened in a virtual newsroom.

In current (and possibly, future) outlets, group work and deliberative communication are constant in journalistic practice. Nevertheless, the Internet and social networks have created a more competitive environment and have exponentially multiplied audience criticism. The Journalism majors who participated in this study adjusted well in a collective decision-making process, although sometimes they demonstrated certain scruples or pride upon submitting their production to a colleague's review.

As for choosing an agenda, these students selected positions in favor of the local community, opting for topics related to defending the gratuity of public universities and against prejudices of any kinds. For instance, they chose to report allegations of acts against human rights on campus, while they also covered topics about mental health of students, professors and other workers in education.

The research-creation methodology proved to be effective in verifying the proclivities of these members of a generation of journalists-to-be and their relationship with emerging technologies and organizational models for news production. This research only observes participants in direct contact with the creative processes proposed for the study (which

integrated the project). Repeating this experience with different groups over the course of five semesters allowed us to detect trends in the newsmaking process among a specific cohort of Journalism students over time. However, the study did not vary in context and geographical space. As such, in order to draw broader comparisons, it would be necessary to look into concomitant experiences in different contexts.

This project's fulfillment within the university context presents clear limitations to providing more general conclusions about the students' attitudes toward digital media use. The *Campus* project is a training platform; thus, the students were not under paid labor relations or legal responsibility. Moreover, their attitudes toward producing content for traditional media were not analyzed, which inhibits a comparison between digital (mainly in social media networks) and analog journalism.

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## NOVINARSKA GENERACIJA Z: ŠTO OČEKIVATI OD NJE U VREMENIMA DEGRADACIJE MEDIJA?

Zanei Barcellos :: Patricia Gil

**SAŽETAK** Ovaj članak predstavlja rezultate istraživačko-stvaralačkog projekta provedenog u Brazilu u razdoblju od trideset mjeseci čiji je zadatak bio istražiti kako se novinari takozvane generacije Z nose s novim tehnologijama i stvaraju specifične narative na konvergirajućim medijskim platformama. Istraživanje je uključilo 125 studenata u projekt stvaranja sadržaja na različitim platformama, pri čemu su se koristile teorija i metode koje je osmislio Paul Freire. Rezultati pokazuju da generacija Z uspostavlja parametre pisanja kojima izbjegava složeno pretraživanje i koji se temelje na virtualnoj redakciji i multitaskingu. Novi novinarski modeli otkriveni kod studenata koji su sudjelovali u istraživanju vjerojatno će se oslanjati na organizacijsko okruženje čije su karakteristike horizontalno odlučivanje i fleksibilnija, demokratičnija produkcija. U kontekstu trenutnog demokratskog nazadovanja u Brazilu, sudionici istraživanja definirali su svoju informativnu agendu kao oblik borbe protiv hegemonijskog diskursa.

### KLJUČNE RIJEČI

GENERACIJA Z, KONVERGENCIJA, ISTRAŽIVAČKO-STVARALAČKI PROJEKT, TRANSMEDIJSKI NARATIVI, VIRTUALNE REDAKCIJE, MULTIPLATFORME

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# STEREOTYPES OF OLD AGE: VIEWS ON THE ELDERLY IN BRAZILIAN ADVERTISING

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**ABSTRACT** *Ageing, more than a demographic phenomenon (a consolidated process in Europe, still a recent one in Brazil), is a social construction influenced by the media. Advertising, which simultaneously reflects and contributes to the construction of social values, uses stereotypes as a tool for creating easily identifiable characters. This study aims at identifying aspects explored by advertising messages using stereotypes to portray older people. The sample consists of nineteen pieces selected from more than 4,500 posts on Facebook and Youtube by the ten companies with the largest advertising spending in Brazil from July 2017 to June 2018. Among the 104 pieces that feature elderly people, nineteen did use stereotypes. In twelve of them, positive stereotypes, always related to longlife accumulated experience, while seven included negative traits, such as elderly people losing touch with reality, having difficulties with technology, poor social interaction, physical impairments, or old-fashioned clothing. Negative stereotyping reflects an outdated perspective of the ageing process.*

## KEYWORDS

ADVERTISING, AGEING, STEREOTYPES, BRAZIL, ADVERTISERS

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## INTRODUCTION

The complexity of ageing makes it possible to develop different interpretations of related phenomena. In this study, we have chosen to consider this diversity of theoretical perspectives, but with an emphasis on the sociological understanding that ageing is a social construction (Caldas, 2007; Leite and Gomes, 2007; Debert, 2012; Lipovetsky, 2016). Advertising is related to this process to the extent that it is developed from what is socially understood as true, while contributing to the solidification of concepts or the change of paradigms concerning various topics (Pinto, 1997; Rocha, 2006; Castro, 2018) – ageing is included among them.

Taking this starting point, we consider the processes of elaboration and production of advertising messages, paying special attention to the way stereotypes are used for the construction of characters (Carrascoza, 2007; Lysardo-Dias, 2007; Debert, 2003; Williams *et al.*, 2010). The original study, part of a doctoral thesis, had a broader sampling from the collection of more than 4,500 materials. For this study, among the materials that included the elderly, those with stereotypical approaches were observed.

This research seeks to address which aspects are explored by advertising messages that use stereotypes to portray older adults? We hypothesize that long-standing negative stereotypes (Beauvoir, 1970; Limón Mendizábal, 1997) are more present and less subtle than positive ones.

This text begins with the contextualisation of ageing as a social construction, addressing the contribution of advertising to the phenomenon. It then presents the demographic context of Brazil, and the criteria for the creation of categories for analysis, for the selection of the sample and the classification of the advertising pieces into categories. From this methodology, materials that contain stereotypical approaches to ageing will be analysed.

## THE MEDIA AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF AGEING

The concept of old age is a complex subject which is discussed by a large number of theories, all of which consider ageing a heterogeneous process – even the view of biological ageing is made from diverse theoretical points of view.

The theories on ageing developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Caldas, 2007), when, with the generalisation of retirement, the focus of studies on the subject changed. The initial concern with the standard of living of the elderly and their survival conditions is now focused on quality of life and lifestyles, and the elderly are seen as a consumer market (Debert, 2012).

Psychology, sociology, and anthropology complement each other in the understanding that ageing goes far beyond the biological issues derived from the passage of years.

Psychological theories consider several interconnected phenomena, which have some connection with chronological age but are not directly linked and relate subjectively to the individual interpretation of what ageing is all about (Papaléo Netto, 2007).

Sociological theories, in turn, observe the social construction of the concept of ageing. Among them, there are opposing understandings about what it would be like to age in the mid-twentieth century. On the one hand, disengagement theory suggests that old age brings about a reduction in social interaction and some isolation, and considers that voluntarily moving away from one's activities leads to a happier ageing; on the other hand, the activity theory proposes that maintenance of activities and search for new social roles improve the quality of life of the elderly (Neri, 2007). However, as Guita Grin Debert points out, both theories, which were very strong until the 1960s, start from the concept that ageing is losing social roles, understanding "how personal adjustment to this situation defined as one of 'loss' occurs" (Debert, 2012: 72).

These perspectives were followed by other generations of sociological theories seeking to understand the complex and heterogeneous process of ageing, and to explain the ways in which social relations of the elderly take place, approaching old age from various angles. Anita Liberalesso Neri (2007) points to the need for constant revision of the theoretical views on the phenomenon of ageing. This makes sense when considering that the structures of societies change significantly due to the influence of new demographic compositions.

Another relevant aspect for the understanding of this scenario is the heterogeneity of the ageing process – which is excessively simplified by some of the theories that attempt to explain it. Ageing may be associated with physical limitations and intellectual decline, but also may be marked by vigour and preserved abilities. Debert (2012) points out that recent theories include various approaches respecting this heterogeneity. Even so, the author identifies a dichotomy. The "new" theories, according to her, assume that the elderly live in one of two extreme situations: situations of loss, abandonment, and poverty, or a lot of activity, breaking stereotypes in such a way that, to a certain extent, "rejects the very idea of old age by considering that age is not a pertinent marker in defining lived experiences" (Debert, 2012: 73).

More recently, the idea of *active ageing* has gained relevance in age-related studies. The concept was built over time from other older theories that emerged in the mid-twentieth century, as presented by Asghar Zaidi and Kenneth Howse (2017). As already presented, at that time ageing was understood as a period of reduced engagement with social life. The disengagement theory, now viewed as old and prejudiced, indicated that retirement was the answer to a natural process of withdrawal and disinterest in social life. From the middle of the twentieth century, other theories emerged from the critique of the idea that ageing is becoming dependent. They seek to understand the role of social activity in the satisfaction of the elderly, or the role of work (in the concept of *productive ageing*) as capable of generating financial independence, thus preventing older people from being a burden to the state. Finally, the authors present the idea of *successful ageing*,

understood as the maintenance of social engagement, health, and the ability to adapt to changes brought about by age.

Thus, the concept of active aging, created by the *World Health Organization (WHO)*, describes “the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (World Health Organization, 2002: 12). The intention of the *WHO* is to influence the formulation of policies in a multidimensional way by integrating ideas of health and social activity that result in the search to reduce the dependence of the elderly on the family and the state: “Policy is to be shaped in a way that combines the promotion of individual well-being with the achievement of benefits to the wider society” (Zaidi and Howse, 2017: 3). The *WHO* considers that active ageing is determined by various aspects: culture, gender, health, social service, behaviour, personal factors, physical and social environment, and economic.

To summarise the changes in the *zeitgeist* regarding ageing and to demonstrate the multiple concepts of old age in a temporal sense, we resort to two authors: Simone de Beauvoir and Gilles Lipovetsky.

Simone de Beauvoir (1970), in her classic work on old age, presents several examples on the suffering that characterises/characterised the life of individuals of advanced age. Her view is pessimistic in most cases, and old age is portrayed as a rather frightening period of loss, limitation, and especially less happy than youth.

Lipovetsky’s view on ageing considers the contemporary context in which medicine and technology have advanced to offer extended longevity and improved quality of life. For the author, until the eighteenth century, “physical suffering affected everyone” (Lipovetsky, 2016: 78). However, it has changed: In the current scenario, “old age no longer has the same meaning. It, except at the end of life, is increasingly less synonymous with physical degradation” (*ibid.*).

It is perceived, then, that interpretations of the meanings of youth and old age are influenced by the social context and the nature of each society and each age. Eduardo Leite and Mayra Gomes identify “the concern to date, metricate, separate, and characterise phases of life” (Leite and Gomes, 2007: 85) as a cultural characteristic.

The difficulty many people have with recognising themselves as elders is an old stereotype, but it is still relevant in contemporary times (Debert, 2003, 2012; Butler, 2009). This can be understood as a reflection of the poor acceptance of old age in society. The appreciation of youth, very much associated with the image of a country like Brazil, is a worldwide phenomenon (which happens in opposition to population ageing) greatly influenced by the media. It is important to consider the social function of these messages in the construction of ageing-related concepts.

Among all media manifestations – news, advertisements, entertainment content, speeches on social networks – advertising has the clearest purposes of causing changes

in (consumption) behaviour. With carefully constructed messages, advertising is seen by many authors as a reasonably faithful portrayal of the time and place in which it is produced (Rocha, 2006; Castro, 2018). However, besides portraying the cultural characteristics of the environment in which it is placed, advertising influences these characteristics. Alexandra Guedes Pinto (1997: 36) states that it not only "reflects the reference systems of a cultural group" but "also contributes to shaping the collective imagination, currently establishing itself as one of the most influential existing means of socialisation" (Pinto, 1997: 37).

Taking into account this understanding, it is possible to state that if there are elderly people being portrayed in a prejudiced or stereotypical manner, this is due to the fact that this ageist discourse is recognised as true by the people who receive the message. At the same time, the stereotyped advertising messages create (or maintain) the understanding that such treatment of the elderly is correct, or at least acceptable.

### AGEING IN BRAZILIAN ADVERTISING

In a publication about the Brazilian advertising market, Mariana Barbosa (2017) makes a quick survey of examples from past decades. Her text features a famous 1970s campaign in which an animation shows a grandmother sitting in a rocking chair, sewing. The image is that of a traditional elderly person with no social life, whose occupation comes down to activities at home.

The example of the next decade is that of an appliance brand commercial, in which a woman refers to two older women as "old-fashioned" and compares them to old appliances. They are knitting while the third is complaining, and their behaviour is disconnected from the reality that surrounds them: they do not interact and seem hard of hearing.

The example from the 1990s is that of a bank: an elderly woman comes home bringing a stereo that the couple wanted for many years, but the husband is now almost deaf. Old age is shown as a phase of losses.

In the 2000s, we begin to see examples of older people shown more autonomously in situations of consumption and interaction with technology. But the humour feature is often present, making use of stereotyped images that reinforce prejudices that could be challenged. Barbosa sums it up: "In past decades, when they appeared, they were portrayed as decrepit, incapable and with hearing problems. More recently, they have even entered the digital age, but they are still mocked or depicted humorously" (Barbosa, 2017: 1).

In a study done at the beginning of this century, Debert (2003) identified profiles of ageing in advertisements, some with a strong stereotype burden. In a first group, older adults were negatively shown as traditional, conservative, dependent, isolated, and insecure people. In a second group, there are the elderly whose description symbolises

'power, wealth, insight, social prestige', a profile presented by Brandão (2007: 827) as a relatively recent phenomenon.

Debert reports a statement by an advertiser interviewed within a survey about the presence of stereotypes to characterise senior citizens in the early twenty-first century: "We work on the stereotypes people are given. We also work hard to break expectations. Often the idea of a great commercial is to subvert the order of the stereotypes that people already have" (Debert, 2003: 140). Brazilian advertising is changing, and stereotypes are an important part of the way this change occurs.

### CREATIVE STRATEGIES IN ADVERTISING: STEREOTYPES AS A PERSUASION TOOL

The role of advertising in social constructions is considered during the process of planning and creating an advertising campaign. These aspects are presented and discussed by authors such as Pinto (1997), Marcélia Lupetti (2007), Thomas C. O'Guinn *et al.*, (2008), George Belch and Michael Belch (2014), and so many others. All of them present the need for an analysis work that leads to a deep understanding of the market in which the brand operates before starting the development of an advertising campaign.

From this diagnosis of the current brand situation, strategies are developed. They articulate brand objectives and methods to achieve them (Lupetti, 2007; O'Guinn *et al.*, 2008). The use of stereotypes is one of the ways to apply these decisions when creating messages. Stereotypes are here understood as 'prior knowledge socially shared' (from the discursive process), a set of "preconceived images that crystallise into a social group" (from the perspective of Moscovici's social psychology). From a sociological perspective, they are "a collective mental image that determines an individual's ways of thinking, acting, and even feeling", as presented by Dylia Lysardo-Dias (2007: 26-27). They have the function of generating immediate identification of contents and characters. In advertising, with little time to convey a message, stereotypes are useful in creating awareness and direct attention to the content that the brand needs to convey without wasting time on contextualisation (Carrascoza, 2007; Neri, 2015).

Thus, stereotypes are capable of aggregating social constructions and promoting "categorisation, generalisation, and prediction" (Lysardo-Dias, 2007: 27). Provided they are used without excesses, which would reinforce prejudices, they constitute an important tool for advertising creation.

To understand which aspects are present in stereotypes regarding ageing in advertising messages, before moving on to empirical study, other perspectives on the subject must be identified.

One of the most relevant studies was conducted by Angie Williams *et al.* (2010). The authors observe the types of images – positive or negative – in magazine ads and the

presence of stereotypes. In this research, they point out that, although no advertiser wishes to associate negative impressions with their products, the presence of older people in situations that devalue them is not uncommon. They also point out that there are different stereotypes, negative or positive, and identify categories such as 'perfect grandparent', 'mentor', and 'celebrity endorser' (Williams *et al.*, 2010:10-11).

To observe in more detail the prejudices against old age, we resort to María Rosario Limón Mendizábal (1997), who identifies some 'myths', which are very present stereotypes. In many ways, they are similar to the first set of descriptions of ageing identified by Debert – all very negative and often belied by gerontology. By analysing the work of Beauvoir (1970), it is possible to realise that the classical approach to old age coincides with almost all of them. The elders described by Beauvoir have all the characteristics classified by Limón Mendizábal, three decades later, as stereotypes still present in the imagination of that time, but which no longer always corresponded to reality. Comparing these views with that of Lipovetsky (2016), which is more recent, there is a new interpretation given to the roles of the elderly. For almost all the stereotypes identified by Limón Mendizábal (1997), it is possible to find in the author's text elements that belie them or at least which allow us to question their validity in contemporary times. The 'myths' identified by the author concern characteristics such as unproductivity, disengagement, inflexibility, conservatism, asexuality, and others (Limón Mendizábal, 1997).

Whether as understandings already surpassed, or as manifestations still present in today's imagination, it is necessary to observe these stereotypes more closely and verify which of them are present in advertising. First, however, it is relevant to contextualise the demographic scenario in which data collection and analysis were performed.

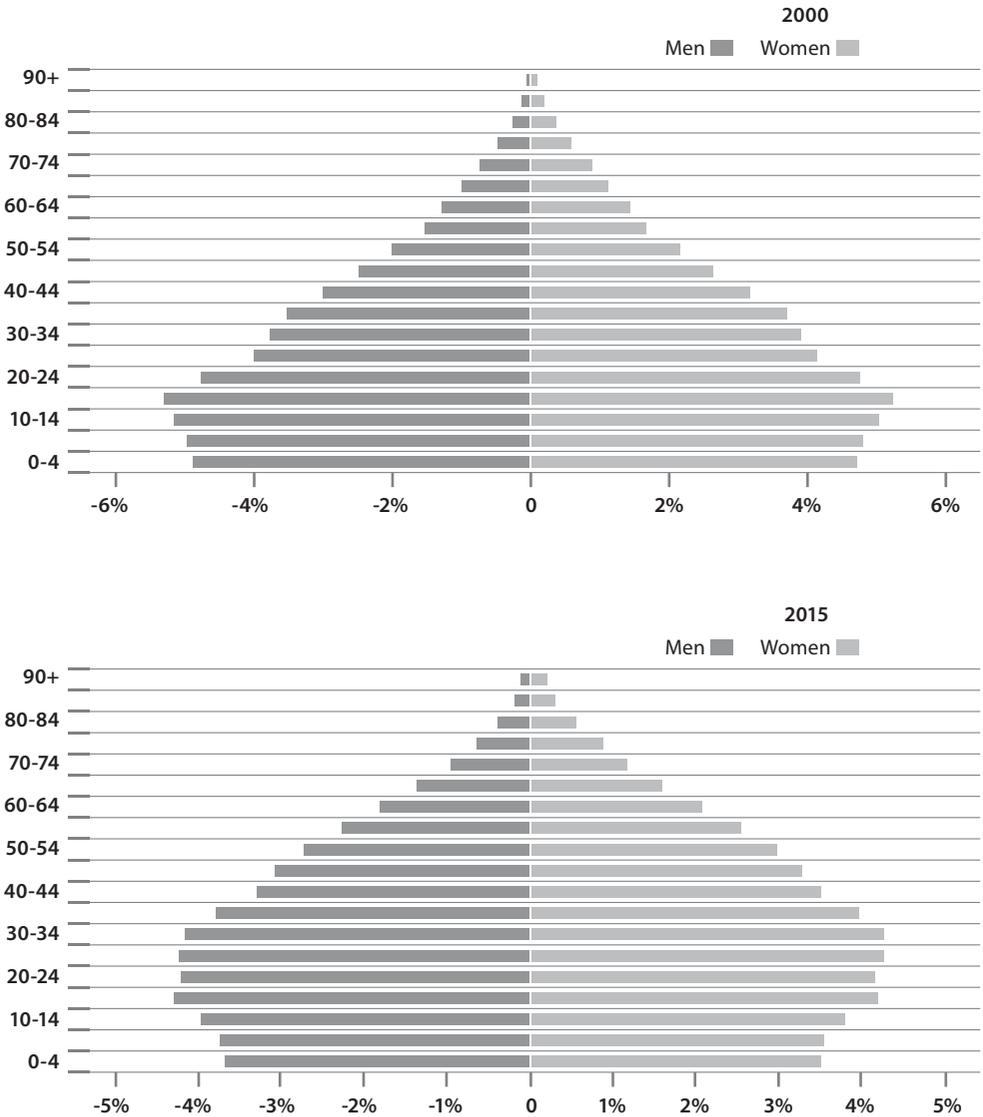
## BRAZIL: LATE AGEING

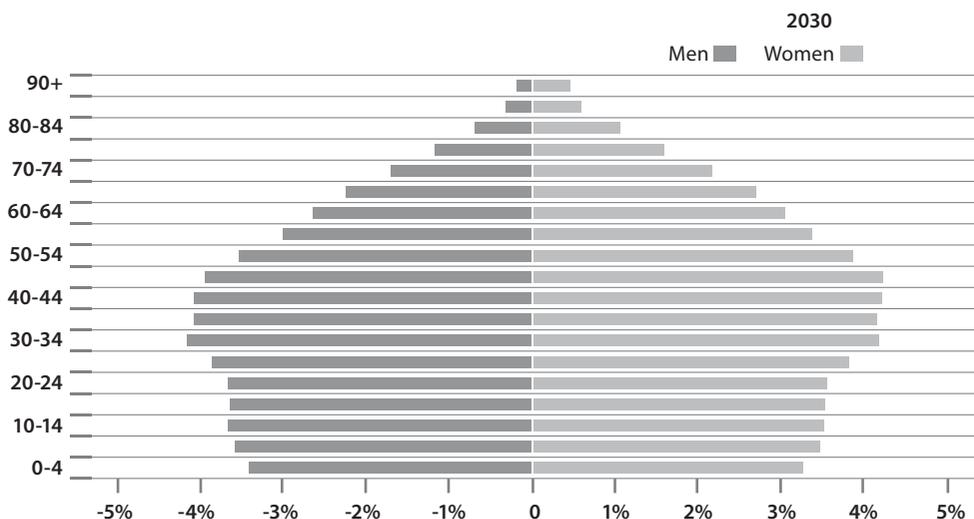
Besides the conceptual changes over time, strongly identified in the already explored views of Beauvoir and Lipovetsky, it should be considered that the process of change in demographic structure varies according to the region.

The ageing of the world population began in Europe and has taken about 200 years to its present stage. In Asia and Latin America, this phenomenon began to occur at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century and will be completed in less than 100 years. Africa is currently at the beginning of this process. Despite time differences, the scenario in all three realities has similar patterns of economic development, as well as of falling child mortality and fertility rates (Harper, 2017).

The elderly population has been growing in Brazil both in absolute numbers and percentages. In 2015, there were about 24 million people over the age of sixty – about twelve percent of the population – and projections consider 66.5 million of them by 2050, which will correspond to more than 29 percent of the population. "Brazil is already

beginning to face some of the issues that currently affect the European countries” (Simões, 2016: 102). The evolution in population distribution by age groups can be observed in Figure 1.





▲ Figure 1. Brazilian population in 2000 and 2015, and projected for 2030 by age groups and gender. Source: *Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE*, for its acronym in Portuguese, 2017

It is in the context of this demographic scenario, in an environment of appreciation of youth and identifying ageing as a complex and heterogeneous process, that this study about the ways in which advertising – a fundamental piece of social constructions concerning old age and ageing – shows such a process, was carried out.

### EMPIRICAL STUDY: STEREOTYPES IN BRAZILIAN ADVERTISING

This research project began with a pilot study conducted from October to December 2017. The pilot study aimed at qualitatively understanding the presence of different approaches to ageing in Brazilian advertising. At that time, the material for analysis was collected using convenience sampling, through the collection of any advertising pieces (ads, films, posts, posters) identified in that period, as long as they showed older people, or had elements that allowed identifying them as targeted at the elderly audience.

Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique which allows material collection to be terminated as soon as materials no longer have different characteristics, according to the saturation criterion (Bodgan and Biklen, 1994). Its results cannot be quantitatively generalized, since it is an unrepresentative sample. They were used to support the qualitative study, allowing the understanding of which positive and negative aspects are present in advertising messages.

The selected materials were classified into categories. Methods pointed out by Bardin (1977) are the first stage of content analysis. As a basis, we considered authors who previously had studied similar topics – especially Debert (2003). From the perspective of these authors – and observing the diversity of materials collected in this first sample – seven categories were established, two of which carry stereotypes. The categories are:

- a) *Negative Stereotype*: Materials that show elders in a situation of inferiority due to characteristics, behaviours, or conditions considered as typical of people in this age group, thus reinforcing ageist stereotypes. These characteristics are very similar to the traditional view of ageing presented by Beauvoir (1970) and Limón Mendizábal (1997), in which the elderly are less capable of social interaction, have physical limitations and little independence.
- b) *Subversion of Traditional Standards*: Materials that show elders in situations that break with standards traditionally associated with ageing. These patterns often come close to negative stereotypes, but this does not necessarily mean that their subversion brings a positive approach to ageing.
- c) *Neutral Approach*: Materials that do not show elements of appreciation nor devaluation of the figure of the elderly. The elderly are present, sometimes in supporting roles, and it is the lack of prominence that allows classifying these materials into this category.
- d) *Positive Approach without Stereotypes*: Materials that value the presence of the elderly or show them in a situation of superiority in relation to the other age groups, but do not reinforce characteristics of the age for the construction of this valorisation.
- e) *Positive Stereotype*: Materials that use elements that are often associated with elders to build a positive view of them. Some of these elements were discussed by Debert (2003) and Williams *et al.* (2010).
- f) *Empowerment of All Ages*: Materials that present activist content regarding rights, visibility, and search for respect for the elderly.
- g) *Message Targeted at the Elderly*: Materials containing elements of text or image that addresses the elderly – this category is designed to identify messages that had seniors as recipients, regardless of approach. For this reason, all messages targeted at the elderly were also classified into some of the other categories.

After the categories were established, the pilot phase of this study was terminated and the definitive sample was collected: Videos on *YouTube* channels and posts on *Facebook* pages of the brands of the ten companies with the largest advertising spending in Brazil<sup>1</sup>, which were published from July 2017 to June 2018. We observed 4,733 materials (732 *YouTube* videos and 4,001 *Facebook* posts), of which 104 – 2.2 percent – showed elders. Twelve different messages were classified into the *Positive Stereotype* category and five into the *Negative Stereotype* category. Besides these, two of the messages in the category *Message Targeted at the Elderly* carried negative stereotypes. All of them will be analysed qualitatively below, using content analysis methods. The description of each material is

<sup>1</sup> The ten largest advertisers were selected considering data from the *Kantar IBOPE Media Institute* (2017). These ten companies are responsible for 244 brands. Of them, 222 did not have either *YouTube* channels or *Facebook* pages, or did not publish content in the period analysed. Only 22 brands had materials published in that period and analysed in this study.

complemented with evaluations regarding aspects that identify stereotypes observed in the works of the authors previously presented. This study has no quantitative purposes and does not intend to discuss the frequency of presence of stereotypes in Brazilian advertising, but to understand the ways in which this occurs.

### Positive stereotypes:

There are twelve videos or posts that were identified for using stereotypes to construct a positive view on ageing. They portray seniors in situations that value them because of specific characteristics typically associated with old age: wisdom, tradition, and life experience. Already in the 1970s, the presence of these positive stereotypes was noticed: "It is rare, but the case that old age is considered the golden key to existence may occur" (Beauvoir, 1970: 260). More recently, Debert (2003) indicates that experience is an element often used in advertising when showing seniors.

The following table summarises the analyses made to enable the classification of materials into categories. It presents the elderly characters and briefly describes the material, indicating which stereotypical characteristics were explored.

Table 1. Summary of the analyses of cases that show positive stereotypes

No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
<b>Brand and Advertiser</b>		
<i>Antarctica (AB InBev)</i>		
1	Aunt Surica, a local celebrity of the city of Rio de Janeiro, from the "old guard" of the Portela school of samba.	She speaks on Portela's traditional <i>feijoada</i> , served to over 3,000 people, and reports the recognition she receives from the community. The experience with the successful <i>feijoada</i> is a highlight.
2	Actor Guti Fraga, the owner of the NGO and theatre group <i>Nós do Morro</i> , in the community of Vidigal (City of Rio de Janeiro).	A testimonial about the character that the actor played in one of Antarctica's web series, similar to his own life story. The piece values experience and achievements.
3	<i>Seu</i> (an informal Brazilian Portuguese term for <i>Mister</i> ) Zé, a senior who used to have difficulties in dealing with technology, turns out to be a renowned waiter.	The second episode of the web series <i>No Curso de Garçom (The Waiter's Course)</i> . The elderly gain protagonism, their experience being valued.
<i>Brahma (AB InBev)</i>		
4	An employee described as 'Grandpa' Ponce, 28 years of Brahma."	A consumer visits the Brahma factory and meets a family of employees. One of them, an elder, shows physical limitations but is valued for his time and experience in the company.



No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
<b>Brand and Advertiser</b>		
<i>Colorado Brewery (AB InBev)</i>		
5	'Grandma' Edma Eluf, a participant of <i>The Soul Kitchen Project</i> , thus described: "Eight grandmothers, eight life stories, eight luncheons".	The film highlights the importance of cooking in the history of a family. There is an association of grandmothers' life stories (experience, accumulated knowledge) with the quality of what they cook.
<i>Goose Island (AB InBev)</i>		
6	John Hall, the company founder.	It is a film that celebrates the brand's 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary, with a testimonial from the founder. The piece values the experience and success of both the founder and the brand.
<i>Stella Artois (AB InBev)</i>		
7	Parents whose adult children were not present at remarkable moments. A calligrapher who makes custom chalices for <i>toasts that never occurred</i> .	Female voiceover: "For some reason, several important toasts were not made with your father. However, now they can happen". Close-up images refer to achievements and celebrations; Handwritten texts by a calligrapher appear on screen: "Became grandpa"; "Your first book," among others. There are scenes of affection between adult children and parents: Hugs, looks of joy, smiles. The film values experience.
<i>Ultrafarma (a Brazilian drugstore chain)</i>		
8 to 11	Celebrities: Elderly actors and television presenters.	Commercials announce Ultrafarma's "Sidney Oliveira" line of food supplements, named after the company's owner. The poster boys, all over 60 years old at the time of the campaign, are: Film 8: Actor Fúlvio Stefanini. Film 9: TV host Raul Gil. Film 10: TV presenter Amaury Jr. Film 11: TV reporter Gil Gomes.
<i>Caixa Econômica Federal or simply Caixa (a major Brazilian public bank)</i>		
12	When the voiceover talks about personal assets, seniors are shown at the door of their homes.	Young male voiceover speaks on reasons why someone could save money. The images describe the same ideas: Buying a gift, taking a trip, building and protecting personal assets. Ageing is shown as an accumulation not only of experiences but also of material goods.

The use of stereotypes, as seen above, is not only frequent but also plays an important role in advertising to identify character profiles. It is possible to draw parallels with the classifications adopted by other authors, especially Williams *et al.* (2010). In the cases of

this sample, the renowned waiter in film 3 (*Antarctica*) can be understood as an example of 'mentor'. Film 5 (*Colorado Brewery*) is built on the concept of the 'perfect grandparent' stereotype. Also, the testimonial strategy used in films 8 to 11 (by *Ultrafarma*) is intended to attract attention and generate credibility (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2008), using what Williams *et al.* (2010) classifies as 'Celebrity Endorser'. Although different profiles can be identified in these stereotypes, there is a common point among them: ageing brings the advantages of accumulating experiences and from them, knowledge, wisdom, authority, and even material goods.

In film 12 (by *Caixa*), the elderly man leaning against the door of his house with an air of accomplishment, refers to what Neri (2007) identifies as *contemplation*, a feature rejected by the current pace of life, and that can only be recovered in old age.

Thus, the topic of ageing brings some consensus on what the positive characteristics of the elderly would be. In relation to negative stereotypes, it usually raises different perspectives, as already extensively addressed here and as will be demonstrated in the following analyses.

### Negative stereotypes:

Among the seven categories established for the analysis, the positive messages could value the elderly without using arguments or stereotyped characterisations to identify them. However, for negative approaches to ageing, there are no cases without stereotypes. Again, we emphasise that the use of stereotypes does not always generate prejudice, and can be an efficient way to identify characters. But in the messages analysed here, stereotypical aspects discredit the image of the elderly, and ageing is shown in a way similar to that described by Beauvoir (1970) and what Limón Mendizábal (1997) calls 'myths'.

There are only five cases in this category, and all are *YouTube* videos. Besides, two other cases in the *Message Targeted at the Elderly* category also had negative stereotypes. The following table provides the essential elements from the analyses of these messages.

The relationship between stereotypes and ageist prejudices is evident in several of the materials analysed, especially films 13 (*Axe*), 15 (*Budweiser*) and 16 (*Stella Artois*).

The materials that use graphic animation resources are the ones that perpetuate stereotypes about costume design and body posture of the elderly the most. In film 17 (*Claro*, a senior woman in a queue), two interpretations exist: The inclusion of an elder among customers is something positive because there is no inferiority in the role she plays in relation to other characters. The second is that, due to the characteristics of the advertising message and the simplicity of production (an animation video, without actors), the only way to effect inclusion is through stereotypes. They are negative but it does not mean the brand has a negative attitude towards the elderly. It is possible to condemn the material for being stereotyped and praise it for being inclusive at the same time.

Table 2. Summary of the analyses of cases that show negative stereotypes

No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
<b>Brand and Advertiser</b>		
<i>Axe (Unilever)</i>		
13	An elderly man is leaning against the back seat of an Uber car, looking at his hands all the time, and apparently disconnected from reality.	The brand sponsors a music festival targeted at young audiences. In the promotion, Uber passengers should interact using a song to win tickets. The image of the senior shares the screen with that of a young woman who wins the ticket. The comparison identifies the elder as unable to pay attention to music and to interact at the same time. Even though he plays a supporting role in the film, there is a connotation of inferiority attached to the elderly for not belonging to the music festival's audience, which indicates ageism, although subtle.
<i>Antarctica (AB InBev)</i>		
14	An elderly waiter shows lack of knowledge of technologies when to use a mobile application: "When I jotted down orders on a pad of paper, everything was easier."	An episode of the web series <i>No Curso de Garçom (The Waiter's Course)</i> . A younger waiter treats the elder with condescension, suggesting that he mentally compose a song with the ordered items when he feels unable to use the technology. The elder speaks little and shows displeasure. The dynamism of the young man contrasts with the difficulty and slowness of the elderly.
<i>Budweiser (AB InBev)</i>		
15	Supporting character: A white-haired lady with a suspicious look. She does not smile like the other younger soccer fans.	It was a film for the 2018 Football World Cup. Its visual language refers to science fiction movies: Drones travel by handing out beer bottles. One of them appears in a subway car where there is a senior woman. After that, at the stadium, it hands the bottle to a young woman. The difference in age and body posture, and the senior woman's appearance of disconnection from the world indicate ageism.
<i>Stella Artois (AB InBev)</i>		
16	Supporting character: An elderly man suspiciously watches the "star hunter" collect the light from the shooting star and distribute it as a Christmas present.	The film <i>O Caçador de Estrelas (The Star Hunter)</i> shows a man who, upon seeing a shooting star, goes to where the light has fallen and collects it in a bottle. In the end, he arrives at a Christmas party and distributes the bottles filled with the starlight to the guests. There is prejudice: Elders are regarded as people with social interaction difficulties.
<i>Claro (a telecommunications company of the América Móvil group)</i>		
17	An old lady with grey hair and glasses leans on a cane, shivering.	Animated movie: People are waiting for a bank teller (the brand promises that customers do not need to "waste time in a bank queue"); their faces and body postures indicate dissatisfaction and impatience. The piece uses stereotypical costume design and body posture resources.



No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
<b>Brand and Advertiser</b>		
<i>Ultrafarma</i>		
18	Four illustrations of a couple of 'grandparents'. Both are white-haired and wear glasses, as well as traditional clothes: Suspenders, calf-length dress, scarf around the neck. They lean on a cane or a walker.	The text addresses the elderly: "Happy Grandparents' Day". The images are accompanied by words: 'affection', 'love', 'fun', 'togetherness'. It is only in the "fun" image that the characters do not hold their walking sticks. They have their arms up and wear accessories (birthday hats, party whistles, and colourful masks). The connotation is that having fun is not something that goes with so many physical limitations; perhaps something restricted to younger people. (This material is classified into the <i>Message Targeted at the Elderly</i> category.)
<i>Caixa (Caixa Econômica Federal)</i>		
19	Seventy-year-olds: A woman wearing her hair in a bun and leaning on a cane; a white-moustached man with white hair on the sides of his head and bald at the top, wearing suspenders.	Information animated video. The representation of the audience over the age of seventy uses stereotypical costume design and body-posture resources. (This material is classified into the <i>Message Targeted at the Elderly</i> category.)

*Ultrafarma's* film 18 uses similar characterisations, but further reinforces stereotypes. Although characters are friendly and smiling figures, associated with positive values (the words in each frame), the message carries negative stereotypes related to physical decrepitude, to identify what 'grandparents' would be.

Contrary to the positively stereotyped view of ageing, the negative stereotypes are constructed from different aspects, thus confirming what the authors cited in this study pointed out concerning the diversity of prejudiced views on the phenomenon.

## DISCUSSION

Although they do not represent the majority of the entire sample surveyed, the messages containing stereotypes deserve specific analysis because they carry a strong judgment burden regarding ageing.

Regarding the profile of these stereotypes, it can be seen that the positive ones are very similar to each other. Contrary to the different stereotypes identified by Williams *et al.* (2010), the cases in this sample have the appreciation of life experience as their common element. From it, it is possible to identify cases that are close to some other characterisation, as in film 5, where the good cook is presented as a 'perfect grandmother'.

In other cases (such as films 2 and 3), there are aspects of 'mentor', another of the classifications proposed by Williams *et al.* (2010).

Unlike the positively stereotyped view of aging, negative stereotypes are constructed from several aspects, confirming what the authors cited in this study indicated regarding the diversity of prejudiced views on the phenomenon of ageing. The analysed cases also differ as to the effect caused by the presence of the elderly in the final result of the materials.

Two of the elderly portrayed appear so disconnected from reality (films 13 and 15) that their presence in commercials brings some humour to the plots. In these cases, they are supporting characters which identify the audiences to whom the message is intended through the exclusion of those to whom it is not intended (the elderly). In film 14, the elder is among the protagonists; through the stereotype of the difficulty in using technology, the depreciation of him is central to the plot – although, in another episode of the web series, redemption happens through a positive stereotype (analysed in film 3). In film 16, the depreciation is more subtle, and the difficulty in social interaction is perceived through body posture, distrust in the eyes, and a certain distance from younger people. All these characteristics are very close to the 'myths' described by Limón Mendizábal (1997).

Stereotypes in costume design and body posture are present in the three materials that used illustrations and not actors. In these cases, the stereotype was used as a resource for creation and production. Since they are illustrations, the simplicity of production makes it necessary to identify the elderly through graphic resources that, without details or any deepening, eventually resort to stereotypes.

## CONCLUSION

Ageing is a current and relevant theme in Brazilian society, which has been undergoing rapid changes in its demographic structure. Thus, it is important to seek to understand aspects that influence social constructs about ageing in this context. Media – and in this study specifically advertising – contribute to these social understandings, hence the relevance of studying the ways in which older people are portrayed in these messages.

One must consider the entire sample to answer the question from which this study was built, and thus verify which aspects are explored by advertising messages that use stereotypes to portray older adults.

Considering the hypothesis that negative stereotypes are more present and less subtle than positive ones, it is possible to verify that the hypothesis raised was partially accepted: positive stereotypes were the most frequent in this study, but indeed these were more subtle than the negative ones.

There are more materials with positive stereotypes (twelve cases, versus seven negative ones). As already discussed, these twelve cases are very similar in terms of which stereotyped aspects are addressed in the messages, which makes its effects on how people view the subject of ageing less powerful.

Regarding the aspect considered in the hypothesis – that the negative stereotypes would be less subtle than the positive ones – one can consider that this is indeed the case. There is a diversity of negative stereotypical approaches: disconnection from reality, difficulty in using technology and in social interaction, stereotyped clothing and body posture. All these aspects reinforce ageism and for this reason their effect on social constructions of ageing is most noticeable.

Thus, it is noteworthy that Brazilian advertising still carries superficial and simplified views of ageing, which gives room for the use of the stereotypes analysed here. Considering the nature of the messages and their social role, already discussed in this text, one can infer that ageism is also present in the country.

From this study, it is possible to open new research fronts in exploring which aspects are present in the other analysis categories identified from the collected sample. This would allow an even broader understanding of the ways Brazilian advertising portrays ageing and the elderly. Similarly, equivalent studies can be applied in societies with different demographic makeups – such as European countries, where the population is relatively older. In these contexts, the research could verify if the greater presence of the elderly in a given society leads to less stereotyped looks by the advertising brands. Regardless of the location and demographic scenario, it is important to take into account the role of advertising, which at the same time reflects reality and has the power to influence contemporary social relations.

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# STEREOTIPI VEZANI UZ STARIJU DOB: POGLED NA STARIJE U BRAZILSKOM OGLAŠAVANJU

Christiane Monteiro Machado :: Jorge Pedro Sousa

**SAŽETAK** Starenje (proces koji je već duboko zahvatio Europu, a sada i Brazil) više od ostalih demografskih fenomena predstavlja socijalnu konstrukciju koja je pod utjecajem medija. Oglašavanje, koje istovremeno reflektira društvene vrijednosti i doprinosi konstrukciji društvenih vrijednosti, koristi stereotipe kao alat za kreiranje prepoznatljivih likova. Cilj ovog istraživanja jest identificirati aspekte oglašivačkih poruka koje koriste stereotipe u portretiranju starijih ljudi. Uzorak se sastojao od devetnaest jedinica oglasa odabranih između 4,500 objava na Facebooku i Youtubeu deset kompanija s najvećom potrošnjom na oglašavanje u Brazilu, u razdoblju od srpnja 2017. do lipnja 2018. Od 104 oglasa koji prikazuju starije ljude, 19 je koristilo stereotipe. U njih 12 koristili su se pozitivni stereotipi u smislu životnog iskustva koje dolazi s godinama, dok ih je 7 prikazivalo negativne osobine koje se vezuju uz starost: gubitak osjećaja za stvarnost kod starijih osoba, teškoće s tehnologijom, siromašna socijalna interakcija, fizičke teškoće ili staromodno odijevanje. Negativni stereotipi odražavaju zastarjelu percepciju procesa starenja.

## KLJUČNE RIJEČI

OGLAŠAVANJE, STARENJE, STEREOTIPI, BRAZIL, OGLAŠIVAČI

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# AGE-INDEPENDENCE FOR MEDIA PEDAGOGY

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**ABSTRACT** *Age is a static socio-demographic dimension, but is it still a useful category for media pedagogy and media competencies? This article is a theoretical examination of the fixation on age in German media pedagogy research and practice. The thesis of this article, therefore, is that this dominant focus on age should be shifted to neglected contexts and ways to discover them. The key point is to distinguish cases in which it makes sense to focus on age groups in media pedagogical research and practice from those in which it is discriminatory and less important than other factors. Therefore, it analyses historical developments that justified concentration on the subject in German media pedagogy and, thus, the overemphasis on age concepts.*

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## **KEYWORDS**

INTERGENERATIONAL APPROACH, MEDIA PEDAGOGY, GERMANY, DISCRIMINATION, LITERACY

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## INTRODUCTION

Media pedagogy is the field of research and practice which should enhance media competence to participate, and emancipate people *in, with and through* media (Gapski and Gräßler 2007). German media pedagogy focuses primarily on *people* in its research and practice (Ganguin *et al.*, 2017: 302). Researchers' and practitioners' question for work is: "What are the people doing with the media?" (Schorb, 2003: 77). Therefore, they define their target groups according to generational lines and the life course (*e.g.* 'children', 'adolescents', 'adults' or 'seniors') (Hartung *et al.*, 2009; Schäffer, 2003; Rosenstock, 2007). The age is by default interpreted as a meaningful context for media appropriation without proving its relevance. The main assumption of this article is that the dominant focus on age should be shifted to other, neglected, contexts and ways to discover them. The rationale for this article is to analyse the problem of ageism in media pedagogy with the aim to provide alternative approaches for defining target groups. The argumentation is based on the assumption that age has little to do with the ability to develop media competences. Lack of awareness and education among certain demographic groups excludes portions of society from taking advantage of the benefits of recent technological developments. For example, the smartphone, a hybrid of technology and online content, combines the known media and their functions (Hepp, 2005). Daily life fosters its obligatory usage (Givskov and Deuze, 2018: 400) because non-smartphone-users are expelled from messenger-groups with family or peers (Rosales and Blanche-Tarragó, 2018). Digital exclusion also occurs with issues related to current schedules and low-priced tickets for public transportation, from administration (Sanchez-Valle *et al.*, 2018) or their online bank accounts (bitkom, 2018).

The article discusses the theoretical impacts of this emphasis on different usages of age concepts by considering arguments for age as an anchor category, as well as the limitations of it. Further, it shows, by giving examples from German media pedagogical work, how age-categories lead to discrimination against older adults. By illustrating the disadvantages, the article encourages researchers and practitioners in the field of media pedagogy to reconsider the use of categories which do not specify the subjects of research: people and media. Referring to the genealogy of German media pedagogy, the article seeks reasons for focusing on age groups in order to find a way to avoid this phenomenon.

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF FOCUSING ON TARGET GROUPS OF AGE

From a media and communication science perspective, media pedagogy is a subdiscipline of sociology where borrowing concepts as the socio-demographic can be appropriate. The basic assumption here is that: "Chronological age, a property of individuals, may stand as a proxy for biological maturation, psychological development, membership in larger social categories (*e.g.*, cohort), or life stage or phase" (Settersten and

Mayer, 1997: 234). Nevertheless, we need to specify it for our research and practice object, *i.e.*, the media, considering that

*we know that chronological age itself is an "empty" variable we rarely assume that it is age itself that causes a behavior; instead, it is whatever age presumably indexes that is thought to be important (...) we must ask ourselves why age is being measured and how it will be used.* (Settersten and Mayer, 1997: 238).

## **AGE AS A FOUNDATION OF EQUALITY**

In media pedagogical research and practice, age is used as an indicator of various complex conditions, yet with some limitations.

### **(1) Orientation on the Curriculum and Socialization**

Media educators use age as an index, when they take socially defined positions into consideration, such as kindergarten, pupils, young people or retirees. These concepts refer to age as an anchor category, which is useful when planning or researching media appropriation or media competences within a curriculum. In educational systems, such as the school system, people can be classified by age, because of the fact that the individual's current career step mirrors his/her socialization process. Even in this case, there are differences between different school systems or regions, like comparing lower-class schools with private ones. With the end of schooling, people's career steps differ (Haubold and Ganguin, 2017) and age is not an indicator of the connection between working life and media competences.

Diversity within generations of adults is high in terms of career patterns (Bergström, 2017; Christensen, 2017; Givskov and Deuze, 2018; Haubold and Ganguin, 2017; Stone *et al.*, 2016; Doh, 2011). Therefore, age is not relevant in informal or non-formal media-pedagogical research and practice or personal media use in leisure time or daily routines. Therefore, age could be *one* variable for adults.

### **(2) Orientation on Different Steps of Development**

Similar interests of the target group can also be structured by using age as an anchor category through specific development issues (Faltenmaier *et al.*, 2013). Focusing on age in this case means emphasizing the conditions of a target group while neglecting their interests, skills and abilities. This connection is valuable in stages of life when usage-skills and abilities have yet to be developed.

According to Beate Sodian (2008), the psychological basis for seeing, listening, or conscious touching are developed around the age of twelve. Furthermore, the ability to understand and abstract, the ability of hypothetical thinking and reflection should be reached by this age (Horn *et al.*, 2016; Krampen, 2008; Oerter and Dreher, 2008). People thus have all physical and psychological skills needed for competent media use when they are around twelve years old, and they are *fully developed for establishing media*

*competences*. These abilities do not decrease with age. The skills and abilities which are needed for media-usage do not distinguish adults from older people or teenagers (Bergström, 2017; Christensen, 2017; Haubold and Ganguin, 2017).

### (3) Discovering the Backgrounds of the Indicator Age

An alternative to using the empty variable of age as a category is to investigate the content of media competence and medium-specific interests of the subjects (Haubold and Ganguin, 2017). Both can be age-independent. Age-related concepts were imported to media pedagogical research, such as biography-research, generational approaches, or research about life span and life-caesuras (Hartung *et al.*, 2009; Schäffer, 2003; Beck *et al.*, 2016; Rosenstock, 2007). These approaches try to overcome discrimination by investigating the differences which result from ageism (Baetge and Harnisch, 2013). Therefore, it is appropriate to use phases of life (Beck *et al.*, 2016; Kruse, 2011; Doh, 2011) as a variable instead of chronological age or age as an anchor category. Nevertheless, age still plays a role as a guideline in these approaches because they are structured chronologically.

## DISCRIMINATION AND AGEISM: MEDIA PEDAGOGY AS A PRIVILEGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Targeting by age groups results in age-discrimination, which can be found in German media pedagogical research and practice. Ageism refers to the “marginalization and discrimination” (Krekula *et al.*, 2018: 33) of groups of people according to their age. The term was formulated to stress the discrimination against older people<sup>1</sup> (Ayalon and Tesch-Römer, 2018: 2). The consequences of this are symbolic, cultural, discursive and ideological and are seen in social practices (interactions), social structures, organizations, and institutions (Berger, 2018: 1). They affect different living conditions, mutual recognition, educational possibilities, as well as material and immaterial resources (*ibid.*). All these aspects can be identified in German media pedagogical research and practice.

### (1) Effects in Organizations and Institutions: Deficient Research

German media pedagogical professions are mostly connected to educational research, which is closely linked to school or teacher training (GMK, 2018a). Twelve media pedagogical professions are directly linked to teachers’ training for primary and secondary school. Further, nine degree-courses are highly specialized in children and media; one of them researches early childhood. In contrast, there is no media degree programme which researches seniors, and only three media pedagogical professions relate directly to adult education (GMK, 2018a). It should not be the aim to demand a profession like this – for reasons which are explained later – but this illustrates disparity.

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, ageism is a problem for younger people as well (*ibid.*). Following the definition of Butler, ageism is a phenomenon around three aspects: “(1). Prejudice against older adults, old age, and aging (*i.e.*, attitudes towards older adults), (2). Discrimination against older adults (*i.e.*, behavioral acts targeting older adults), and (3). Institutional norms and strategies supporting stereotypes and reducing the opportunities of older adults.” (Ayalon and Tesch-Römer, 2018: 12, as quoted by authors).

To speak about the first aspect, empirical research is needed, that survey if and how ageism comes upon German media pedagogies. This article concentrates on the second and especially on the third dimension.

The essential media pedagogical research institute, the *JFF (Institute for Media Pedagogy in Research and Practice)*, concentrates on children and adolescents (JFF, 2018). Likewise, the *media pedagogical research association South-West* (the *mpfs*) collects data about the media usage of children and young people (mpfs 2018). In 2012, the *JFF* started to stress the early childhood by introducing the *miniKIM* research panel, which focusses on two to five year old children. Since 2016, they have expanded their research on children's families, but the main focus is still on children (mpfs, 2018).

Even when media pedagogy takes seniors into account, the main focus lies on the description of their deficiencies in comparison to *ordinary* users. "Life's caesuras" (Kruse, 2011: 254; Doh, 2011: 20, 73) of older people focus on gone things. The orientation on biological physical and psychological changes (Simon et al., 1999: 29) ask for tasks to cope. Furthermore, concepts of generational media usage try to explain why older people use media differently (Thalhammer, 2017; Hepp et al., 2014, 2015), which fosters and reinforces stereotypes (Schorb, 2017: 256).

## (2) Effects in Educational Opportunities: Young People vs. the Leftovers

The media authorities in Germany, the major actors in informal media education, define 'children and young people' (die medienanstalten, 2018a) as their target groups for enhancing media competencies. Three out of the fourteen media authorities list 'adults', one 'seniors' and only the media authority of the smallest federal state, Saarland, names 'all' as its target group (die medienanstalten, 2018b). The *German Professional Association for Media Education (GMK)* focuses the informal media education on young people (GMK, 2018b). The most important media pedagogical German award for best practice the *Dieter Baacke Preis* groups projects with older people together with those involving disabled people<sup>2</sup> with the purpose of 'exchange between generations' (von Gross et al., 2018)<sup>3</sup>, which means that young people are required.

This stereotyped image of pedagogical work implies that intergenerational practice means that young people teach older. Projects are built around children and their grandparents (die medienanstalten, 2016: 120). The media authorities have been funding projects where 'intergenerational' means that seniors get an insight into new media from children or young people (die medienanstalten, 2018b). If older people are involved or addressed in practice projects, their strengths are reduced to 'life experience' (Mayer, 2009: 115, 122), which is discriminatory and follows false assumptions. Young people are not necessarily in touch with the media or informed about all their functions (Initiative D21 e.V., 2019: 38). Secondly, this describes only technical competence while reflexive competencies in particular are rarely addressed. Thirdly, technical competence is unrelated to teaching skills. Moreover, *new* media are built upon functions from the existing media and, thus, are not entirely new, so they are familiar to experienced users.

<sup>2</sup> While on the subject, it is worth noting that this is discriminative against disabled people as well. In point of fact, it seems as if their disabilities were not taken seriously.

<sup>3</sup> The translation of category 4 of the Dieter-Baacke-Preis: "intergenerational/integrative projects (e.g. media pedagogical cooperation, exchange between generations, family-oriented media work, media pedagogical projects in the context of inclusion or integration of children and young people with disabilities)" (GMK, 2018c).

### (3) Social Interaction: Mutual Recognition as Symbolic and Positive Discrimination

Discrimination is reflected by the use of derogatory terms like 'Silversurfers' (Röser, 2017), 'Silvergamers' (Kohring and Heinz, 2012) or 'Senior-Courses' (die medienanstalten, 2018b). The term 'Silversurfer', for example, refers to physical ageing because it creates an image of elderly media users, who supposedly act differently from other groups. It is a classical difference construction (Scherr, 2017: 44) and additional linguistic discrimination (Schorb, 2009: 320). It was not possible to find a homogenous media usage of the older-aged generation (Loos, 2012; Doh, 2011). Instead, there are different media generations, where older people are subordinated (Hepp *et al.*, 2017: 81; Beck *et al.*, 2016; Hepp *et al.*, 2015).

An effect of considering people as special media users is that parallel media-worlds are created. Middle-aged and senior users are interesting for economic reasons (Schorb, 2009: 320). Meanwhile, the Federal Ministry claims that people are "never too old for the Internet" (BMFSFJ, 2018) and implicates topics, which are just for retired persons. There has been some research about digital immigrants or older people's abstinence from new media content and practical ways to integrate them (*e.g.*, Hartung *et al.*, 2012–2019). Courses about smartphone-use for mature people have emerged (Kübler, 2019), and research has begun to address the leftovers (BMBF, 2018; BMFSFJ, 2018).

Dealing with these stereotypes is hard (Klein, 2017; Baetge and Harnisch, 2013) because it leads to self-stereotyping (Rebelo, 2018), which leads to problems in daily life (Thomas and Thomas, [1928] 1970). Discrimination occurs because of established stereotypes, which are also reproduced in media pedagogical practice.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: REASONS FOR THE DOMINANT FOCUS ON AGE

An explanation for why German media pedagogy addresses target age groups and is biased in favour of young people can be found in its history.

### From Protecting to Privileging Minors

One of the largest fields of work in media education in Germany is protection of minors. In cases of media protection, age as a socio-demographic factor still plays a dominant role in research and practice. In the beginning, the groups who were media-protected were not addressed in relation to age, but in terms of their reading skills (Stöber, 2003: 140). Subsequently, women and non-adults were once defined as those who were protected from the content of "trash and dirt literature" (Barth, 2002: 82; Jäger, 1988: 173). Whereas gender has ceased to matter in targeting media protection, the youth and children are still protected from harmful media content by German law (BMFSFJ, 2014). German youth media protection still distinguishes children aged zero to six; twelve; sixteen and eighteen. (JuSchG & JMStV, 2015). This dominant focus on young people makes sense in terms of

orientation on development psychology. Otherwise, it is questionable, if the categories of decision making that youth media protection is using – such as fear, violence, sexuality, or extremism (KJM, 2019) – are completely age-independent and could be directly classified (as the *Pan European Game Information (PEGI)* already does). In this case, people could decide on their own (or parents for their children) if they are *old enough* for the content. Such a method already works in practice because there is no age limit for books.

After the media pedagogical phase of protection, media pedagogy focused on education and especially on children's and youth's education (Hüther and Podehl, 2005). Educational technologists, for instance, produced media and media content for schools (Hüther and Podehl, 2005). Whereas German media pedagogy aimed to educate the entire population after World War II to limit the effects of propaganda, recent research has concentrated on young people's education, thus focusing on their work at school (Süss *et al.*, 2013). Media pedagogues have established target-group-friendly content and methods for young people, such as school films or a children's channel (*KiKA*) (Hüther and Podehl, 2005). The media authorities have been founded. Also, researchers focus on the target groups of young people to learn more about their daily lives, their particular problems and requirements (as the research institutes *JFF* and *mpfs* still do today).

In later years, media educational researchers and practitioners opened the field of labour. Since the rise of the Internet, media pedagogy has dealt with careers (Hüther, 2005). 'Media pedagogy for adults' means 'media pedagogy for vocational education' (Helbig and Hofhues, 2018). Retired people's human resources offered focusing on the target group of older adults with the appeal to life-long learning. An economic rather than pedagogical, perspective has been adopted, which gives rise to a new problem: The oldest are excluded from access to media pedagogy because they are not part of the labour market (Schorb, 2009: 319).

## FOCUSING AGE THROUGH MISUNDERSTOOD DIDACTIC DEFINITIONS

Current discrimination against adult media users stands in opposition to the postulation of an age-independent approach of pedagogy and especially of media competence's aims (Schorb, 2017: 256). The limited target groups of media pedagogical work and research were not intentioned. On the contrary, Comenius – as one of the cornerstones of German media education – demanded education for everyone (Schaller, 1995). Even though Comenius tried to prepare content for a younger generation, he intended to do so for all, particularly for those who are disadvantaged, who are unprivileged (Schaller, 1995).

With the development of media competence concepts, the focus shifted to the consideration of age. The models contain 'reflexive' (Baacke, 1996; Schorb, 1997; Moser, 2010; Groeben, 2002), 'cognitive' (Schorb, 1997; Aufenanger, 1997; Kübler, 1996; Tulodziecki, 1997) or 'affective' (Aufenanger, 1997) dimensions. They are theoretically described as being age-independent, but in research and practice, they define groups based on age. To

differentiate target groups by aspects other than stages of development shifts the anchor category to age groups. Dieter Baacke (1980a; Baacke and Vollbrecht, 2003) describe media competences as didactics to deal with media. He differentiates the categories of young people from 0–5, 6–12, and 13–18 years, yet his idea of media competence is age-independent (Baacke, 1979; 1980b; 2004; 2018). Nevertheless, these categories are used as target groups and in a way that excludes adults.

Marc Prensky (2001: 6) has a similar idea as he formulates the ‘digital natives’ and ‘digital immigrants’ as different types of media appropriators, who need new ways to plan the didactics with new “methodologies for all subjects, at all levels”. Unfortunately, it led to discrimination, when digital natives were characterized as young and digital immigrants as mature adults (Loos, 2012) even though *new media* are new for everyone. Also, everyone needs new ways to appropriate them. For this reason, it is necessary to overcome the age-based target groups and re-establish an age-independent media pedagogy.

## CONCLUSION: OVERCOMING THE DOMINANT AGE-FOCUS

This article offers impulses for reconsidering the dominant focus on age (when discussing target groups in media pedagogy). The proxy of age reaches its limits by referring to adults and older people. The concepts reach their limits when media pedagogy is dedicated to people from the age of twelve and non-formal and informal education. Therefore, the proxy age should not be overrated. Focusing on age leads to neglecting other attributes that are probably relevant, such as biographical caesuras, developmental or generational issues.

The article illustrates that ageism is a problem within German media pedagogy in its organisational and institutional aspects. Research and practice focus on the categories of age, particularly young people. One consequence of this is that *the elderly or older people* is used as a residual category in which to collect a kind of leftovers respectively young people, for whom the media pedagogical projects are conceptualized. It ends up in fewer educational possibilities for leftovers. In this case, middle-age groups of ‘adults’ are discriminated as well. Older-aged adults face symbolic discrimination by being targeted through the use of deficient and difference constructions. By trying to address the leftovers, an overemphasis on the group of *non-minors* leads to positive discrimination (as Rothermund and Temming (2010) describe as a problem for democracy). All these effects of ageism have an impact on material and immaterial resources, thus excluding older people not only from media education but also from daily life practices.

To discover the reasons for the normative depiction of age and frequent discrimination that adults and seniors face when dealing with media, the article summarises historical developments of media pedagogy in Germany. Media educators started with the age-independent idea of including the unprivileged and protecting the youth. This evolved into a form of privileged treatment in which those who are not children or adolescents

are neglected. Both Comenius and media pedagogues who developed models for media competence (by following the Habermasian perspectives of Enlightenment about a self-determined subject (such as Baacke (1996), Schorb (1997) or Gapski (2001)), implemented media pedagogy for everyone, especially for unprivileged people and minorities. The didactic implementation where developmental psychological stages are decisive led to the misconception that age differences are relevant to media appropriation. Subsequent analysis of the roles that media play in the labour market led to a focus on employees who are in preparation for, or within working life, while those who do not participate remain as leftovers.

Stressing age as an anchor category causes ageism and discrimination, which disadvantages the supposed group of older people even though they are not different from others in their media appropriation, which stands in contrast to an age-independent aim of media pedagogy. The aim should be to re-establish media pedagogy for everyone again.

One of the problems of emphasising age lies in the orientation on psychological development, which uses age as an anchor category. Through creating didactic ways to inform media competence, those concepts were overtaken. This explains the focus on the subject within the German media competence approaches. From an idealistic point of view, the main concepts argue top-down and describe how a person should be to become a competent individual (Schiefner-Rohs, 2013). The subject's predispositions, especially the development stages, are based on age.

A way to solve this subject-centrist perspective is to combine it with the Anglo-American media-literacy ideas, where the emphasis lies more on the media (see Table 1.). Contrary to the theoretical German media competence, the media literacy tradition lies in pragmatism (Dewey, 1997). Following the aim of alphabetization – as the word literacy illustrates – it is an empirical approach (Ganguin *et al.*, 2017). With the aim to decode information (Swertz and Fessler, 2010), the media are described as technical devices and mediators of content. The question is: What do the media want to be done by the subject? To understand the media and become literate, it is necessary to know and see through their technical characters whereby the subject is described as a user: What allows the media to be done by the person? The focus lies on functional skills and abilities, which a person needs to act with the media (Aufderheide and Firestone, 1993). Therefore, the perspective completes the German one that takes these skills and abilities for granted (Baacke, 1996). Moreover, both most central media literacy models standardize the steps of decoding (Livingstone, 2004; Potter, 2004), and target media-specifics. Consequently, they describe them independently of the subject (*i.e.* they are age-independent).

Table 1. General Comparison of German Media Competence and Anglo-American Media Literacy Perspectives (cf. Gemkow and Haubold, 2016).

Media Competence	Category of Comparison	Media Literacy
Enlightenment (Theoretical)	<i>History</i>	Literacy/Alphabetization (Pragmatic)
Idealistic Dimensions for a Subject (Pedagogical Ideal)	<i>Focus on</i>	Pragmatic Steps of Acting with Media (Explicit Usage)
Deductive, Normative (Top Down)	<i>Concept</i>	Deductive, Normative (Bottom Up)
Participating/Emancipated Subject	<i>Aim</i>	Decoding Media Messages
Creator of Media / Self-Determined Part of Society	<i>Subject</i>	User of Media
Cultural Objects	<i>Media</i>	Technical Devices with Specific Characters

Through this polarisation, a wide spectrum of how media pedagogical work can be situated is demonstrated (see Table 1.). Focusing on the subject is only one possibility. Therefore,

>Instead of stressing the subject’s characteristics, the Anglo-American perspective gives various connection options to emphasize a wide range to describe media competence/literacy.

>There is a lack of empirical exploration on the German side.

>The idealistic view needs a pragmatic counterpart, inasmuch that the situational aims of the person do not step back behind theoretical ideals, which would connect the concept of media education with the one of media competence.

In an interactional perspective (Süss *et al.*, 2010: 60; Schorb, 1995: 46), neither centres on the subject nor the medium. It also solves the problem that each dimension is limited in its relation to the media pedagogical practice, where mediatization (Krotz, 2001) connects these concepts. Interaction, thus, defines what is relevant in the situation of the media appropriation process. Depending on this, age *could* be a context but is no context per se.

Therefore, one way for age-independent media pedagogy could be to reclassify people regarding their media appropriation along both of the questions, instead of focusing on only one, thus developing subject-media-specific categories. Instead of borrowing contexts like age from socio-demographics, it is important to prove which contexts are essential for and in the single situation of interaction, which contexts are necessarily relevant.

The article invites media pedagogical practitioners and researchers to prove the relevance of age by defining target groups and to further investigate more research subject-specific contexts. These arguments simultaneously draw attention to a significant desideratum in an age-independent – and for this less discriminatory – media pedagogical research and practice.

Instead of borrowing concepts from other social sciences or using old fashioned categories or finding contexts of media appropriation on purpose or by accident, it is necessary to investigate and use media- and subject-specific contexts, too. The recommendations are:

- >not to fall back on the common age-dependent target groups, when searching for equalities between them,
- >to be sensitive to discrimination, especially to ageism and,
- >to take other contexts into account.

The foregoing refers to both subjects of research: people and media. The recommendations are intended to establish age-independent media pedagogical research and practice.

In summary, the article provides the field of media pedagogy with a novel approach through combining perspectives and media scientific traditions. The table focuses on a wider spectrum of contexts of adult media appropriation and, thus, provides multi-perspective approaches, which could shift the problem of ageism in media pedagogy.

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# MEDIJSKA PEDAGOGIJA NEOVISNA O DIMENZIJI DOBI

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**Rebekka Haubold**

**SAŽETAK** *Dob je statična sociodemografska dimenzija, no pitanje je je li to još uvijek korisna kategorija za medijsku pedagogiju i medijske kompetencije. Ovaj članak teorijski propituje usredotočenost na dob u istraživanju i praksi njemačke medijske pedagogije. Teza ovog članka jest da se dominantni fokus na dob treba preusmjeriti na zanemarene kontekste i načine kako ih otkriti. Ključna je stvar razlikovati slučajeve u kojima ima smisla usredotočiti se na dobne skupine u medijskim pedagoškim istraživanjima i praksama od onih u kojima je to diskriminatorno i manje važno od ostalih čimbenika. Stoga se analizira povijesni razvoj koji je opravdao koncentraciju na tu temu u njemačkoj medijskoj pedagogiji i prekomjerni naglasak na pojmovima koji se vezuju uz dob.*

## **KLJUČNE RIJEČI**

MEĐUGENERACIJSKI PRISTUP, MEDIJSKA PEDAGOGIJA, NJEMAČKA, DISKRIMINACIJA, PISMENOST

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# GENERATIONAL PATTERNS OF DIGITAL NEWS CONSUMPTION: FROM TRADITIONALISTS TO MILLENNIAL MINIMALISTS

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**ABSTRACT** *Digital high-choice media environments (Prior, 2007; Van Aelst et al., 2017) lead to fragmented and polarized news consumption. The concept of news repertoires was introduced to analyze media use in a cross-media environment. News repertoires were found to be diverse across countries, to be dependent on age groups, socioeconomic status, and to have effects on political knowledge and participation (Diehl et al., 2018; Edgerly et al., 2018; Strömbäck et al., 2018; Wolfsfeld et al., 2016). The aim of this study is to identify different news repertoires in Croatia and to test the effects of generational belonging and socioeconomic status on the formation of these repertoires. It has been shown over time that age and political interest are more important predictors of increasingly diversified and polarized news consumption (Bergström et al., 2019; Strömbäck et al., 2013). This study discusses the interplay of socio-demographic factors and political interest in driving news consumption across different generations. The analysis is based on data from Reuters Digital News Survey conducted in Croatia in 2018. Latent class analysis is used to identify news repertoires and the covariates which form them. The analysis resulted in identifying five news repertoires: minimalists, digital-born users, traditionalists, commercial media users and eclectics.*

## KEYWORDS

AUDIENCE, FRAGMENTATION, NEWS REPERTOIRES, GENERATIONS, POLITICAL INTEREST

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## INTRODUCTION

Various models of democracy share assumptions of the role of media and citizen involvement in the political process. Liberal democracies expect that the media serve as a citizen forum which promotes debate on issues of public interest, as a watchdog against misuse of power, and a mobilization agent encouraging citizen learning and participation (Norris, 2000: 23-24). Although different models of democracy assume different expectations regarding news, even those which require the least engagement in the public sphere still emphasize the importance of news consumption. For example, Michael Shudson's model of monitorial citizen and John Zaller's idea of media functioning as burglar alarm assume that citizens dedicate most of their time to their private lives (explained in Strömbäck, 2005). Politics is in these models left to professional politicians, while media are there to alarm citizens only when things go wrong. Unlike this minimal view of democracy, other models expect more involvement and responsibility from citizens and media in influencing politics and making democracy work (Strömbäck, 2005). How can these expectations be fulfilled in contemporary media environments?

Contemporary media environments are described as high-choice media environments which influence structures and flows of political communication (Prior, 2007; Van Aelst *et al.*, 2017). The changes brought by these systems are discussed in terms of concern over less supply of political information, lower quality of news, higher media concentration, lower diversity of media content, fragmentation and polarization of media audiences, increasing relativism and higher inequalities in political knowledge (Prior, 2007; Van Aelst *et al.*, 2017). Audiences become more fragmented and polarized and consume news in line with their political attitudes. Current media systems offer more possibilities to avoid news and in the same time allow for highly interested news seekers to enjoy higher quality information, which has implications for political participation (Prior, 2007; Van Aelst *et al.*, 2017). However, at the same time audiences mostly rely on mainstream media for news (Nielsen *et al.*, 2019) and consume information inconsistent with their views (Van Aelst *et al.*, 2017,) or are incidentally exposed to various information (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2018). There is a larger share of disinformation, but no evidence of higher audience demand for this (Nelson and Tadeja, 2018; van Aelst *et al.*, 2017).

## DYNAMICS AND EFFECTS OF NEWS CONSUMPTION

The latest *Digital News Report* by the *Reuters Institute* (Nielsen *et al.*, 2019) demonstrates the dominance of television and digital news which are increasingly consumed on mobile devices and through various platforms. Audiences have more choice in news, but tend to trust media less, and are more concerned about misinformation (Nielsen *et al.*, 2019). The relationship between news consumption and citizenship is framed through media malaise or virtuous circle approach. The media malaise approach (and the *spiral of cynicism*) posits that exposure to media results in political cynicism and lower trust towards political institutions, which draws citizens away from politics (Delli Carpini, 2004). According to

the virtuous circle approach, engaged citizens will follow news and have higher political knowledge, which will sustain their political interest and motivate them for further political engagement (Norris, 2000). Television news might encourage deeper psychological involvement with political issues, teach about politics and have a democratizing effect for audiences with lower education or political interest (Delli Carpini, 2004). Newspapers offer deeper and broader analysis of political events but are more commonly read by audiences of higher socio-economic status (Delli Carpini, 2004). The networked and interactive nature of digital media allows its users a more active relationship with news. Contemporary political communication research has identified mostly positive effects of digital and social media on political participation (Boulianne, 2015, 2009; Dimitrova *et al.*, 2014; Strömbäck *et al.*, 2018; Skoric *et al.*, 2016; Gil de Zúñiga *et al.*, 2012). However, social media have some shortcomings, such as limited effect on political knowledge (Dimitrova *et al.*, 2014). Although social media provoked concerns over news audiences closing in 'filter bubbles' based on their own personal preferences and social networks (Pariser, 2011), research discovered that social media have a wide potential of incidentally exposing audiences to diverse sources of news (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2018).

News consumption is shaped by various factors on the individual and structural level (Bergström *et al.*, 2019; Blekesaune *et al.*, 2012). Comparative research finds that citizens with higher socioeconomic status and those with higher interest in news and politics tend to be more engaged with news (Blekesaune *et al.*, 2012; Shehata, 2010; Shehata and Strömbäck, 2011). Environments with higher media supply place more value to audience selection and preferences, which makes political interest more important in news selection (Prior, 2007; Strömbäck *et al.*, 2013). This allows audiences to take advantage of increased news supply, while those with less interest tend to tune out (Strömbäck *et al.*, 2013: 431). Incidental exposure to news could have a weak potential of bridging the gap between news and entertainment seekers (Kim *et al.*, 2013). With time, age has become a more important predictor in news choice, as well as socioeconomic status for certain types of news (Bergström *et al.*, 2019). Trust in news and media also influences news choices.<sup>1</sup> Lower trust drives media choice to alternative, non-mainstream news sources, and to social media which expose audiences to a more diverse set of news brands (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2019). Latest research demonstrates decreasing trust across different media systems, connected with the rising concern over misinformation (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2019). Media literacy is also an important aspect of news consumption, and it can motivate users to become more politically engaged in the digital sphere and to be exposed to more diverse information and worldviews (Kahne *et al.*, 2012).

<sup>1</sup> It is normatively expected that news trust in democratic media systems with a high level of media independence positively affects informed political choice (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2019). However, lower trust in news might be a sign of 'healthy skepticism' towards information sources (Tsfati and Ariely, 2013: 775), especially in countries with higher political instrumentalization of media.

## NEWS REPERTOIRES IN HIGH-CHOICE MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

Recent studies started to include various measures of multi-media use to analyze news consumption in high-choice media environments, like 'media or news repertoires', 'media diet' or 'multi-platform news use' (Diehl *et al.*, 2018; Hasebrink and Domeyer, 2012). Media repertoires are defined as "entirety of media that a person regularly uses" and that these repertoires are recognized as „relatively stable trans-media patterns of media use" (Hasebrink and Domeyer, 2012: 759).

More emerging research is dedicated to news repertoires. In Asia, repertoires of 'news avoiders', 'new media news users', and 'traditional news users' are found in South Korea (Lee and Yang, 2014), while Chinese audiences usually combine traditional and digital media (Yuan, 2011). Stephanie Edgerly (2015) identifies six news repertoires among American audiences: 'news avoiders', 'Internet users', 'television and press audiences', 'liberal online audiences', 'conservative audiences' and 'news omnivores'. Another study traces news repertoires among young citizens in the USA: 'news avoiders', 'curated news only', 'traditional news only' and 'news omnivores' repertoires (Edgerly *et al.*, 2018). In Israel, 'traditional', 'eclectic', 'social media' and 'news avoiders' repertoires are identified (Wolfsfeld *et al.*, 2016). In Northern Europe, Dutch audience fragments into 'minimalists', 'public news consumers', 'popular news consumers' and 'omnivores' (Bos *et al.*, 2016). The largest repertoire in Sweden is that of low news use, labeled 'minimalist' (Strömbäck *et al.*, 2018). Research in Croatia establishes that traditional media play an important role in Croatian media repertoires (Peruško *et al.*, 2017) and that a richer news repertoire positively influences digital political participation (Vozab, 2016).

Although analysis of news repertoires has been done in different media systems, on different samples, using diverse ways of operationalization and various statistical techniques in distinguishing groups of users, certain patterns of repertoires can be noticed. Most research discovered users who have an overall low news use. These users are labeled as either 'news avoiders' or 'minimal media users' and tend to be the largest group of consumers.<sup>2</sup> 'Traditional media users', 'digital media users' and 'omnivore' or 'eclectic users' are also found in different media environments. Age, education and political interest proved to be important in distinguishing different groups of news consumers (Strömbäck *et al.*, 2018). The effects of news repertoires are also found. Traditional news users and those with more news in their repertoire tend to be more politically knowledgeable, have a higher political efficacy and participate more (Lee and Yang, 2014; Wolfsfeld *et al.*, 2016). Social media repertoire is linked with political participation, but the correlation with political knowledge is ambiguous (Strömbäck *et al.*, 2018; Wolfsfeld *et al.*, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Depending on the author, users who were found – either by cluster analysis, latent class analysis or another method – to have a low use of different news sources were labeled either 'news avoiders' or 'minimalists'. These categories are certain methodological constructs and differ depending on the sample, method and questionnaire used in the analysis. The term 'news avoiders' does not necessarily refer to those who actively avoid news. For example, in Hyunwoo Lee and Jungae Yang (2014) and Edgerly *et al.* (2018) research, they are defined as those who have a lower than total mean media use across all the examined platforms. Linda Bos *et al.* (2016) define 'minimalists' as those who use news the least. However, the authors acknowledge that this label does not refer to audiences that completely or actively avoid news.

## GENERATIONAL PATTERNS OF NEWS CONSUMPTION

Patterns of news consumption are formed through socialization at a young age (Lee *et al.*, 2013; York and Scholl, 2015). Family relations, parent characteristics, schools, peer groups and political and media environment shape habits of news consumption during the socialization period (Čuvalo and Peruško, 2017; Diehl *et al.*, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2013; York and Scholl, 2015). Behavior and practices accepted during the formative years in childhood and adolescence are likely to persist throughout one's adult life (Čuvalo and Peruško, 2017; York and Scholl, 2015). Comparative research shows gaps and different patterns in news consumption between different age cohorts. Older-age groups tend to prefer traditional media as sources of news, mostly television (Kalogeropoulos, 2019). Younger generations rely mostly on digital news sources, social media and messaging applications, valuing video formats. Moreover, they are less occupied with news brands, often leaving news selection to algorithmic recommendation and personalization systems (Kalogeropoulos, 2019). They are found to be more often disconnected from news (Blekesaune *et al.*, 2012), and are more likely to get in contact with news incidentally, in an unstructured and superficial way, thanks to their constant immersion in social media (Boczkowski *et al.*, 2017).

'Generation' is a useful sociological concept for explaining such different patterns in news consumption. Media and communication scholars commonly use Karl Mannheim's concept of generation, which is defined as a social construct pointing to age cohorts which share similar social and historical experience, which is reflected in their values and habits (Bolin, 2016; Čuvalo and Peruško, 2017; Diehl *et al.*, 2018). Karl Mannheim distinguishes three main factors for delineating generations: "(1) sudden social changes (for example war, revolution, a sociocultural flow, *etc.*) that the individual has experienced at a tender age, (2) generational self-awareness arising from these social changes and (3) the common aspiration for specific ideals." (in Opermann, 2014: 45). Generational groups are therefore different in the USA (Bennett *et al.* 2009; Zukin *et al.*, 2006), Estonia (Opermann, 2014) or Sweden (Bolin, 2016), but certain generational patterns can be identified, *e.g.*, across Europe (Aroldi and Colombo, 2007). Media generations are, on the other hand, defined as age cohorts socialized with a certain set of media technologies, or in a certain media landscape (Bolin, 2016; Čuvalo and Peruško, 2017). In Croatia, the oldest, traditional media generations are followed by digital immigrants, while the youngest cohorts of digital users are divided into those who follow news and those who do not (Čuvalo and Peruško, 2017).

Besides this analysis, there are no other empirical analyses found which defined generational groups in Croatia. For this reason, it is a challenge to choose among different approaches to conceptualization and measurement of generations. Defining a 'Mannheimian' generation in the Croatian context would require a separate conceptual or empirical study like the one conducted, for example, in Estonia, which defined five specific generational cohorts (Opermann, 2014). This analysis borrowed operationalization of generations as chronological age cohorts (from Diehl *et al.*, 2018, similar are discussed in Aroldi and Colombo, 2007 and used in Westlund and Weibull, 2013, and Zukin *et al.*,

2006). 'Dutiful citizens' are those born before 1946 and have memories of World War II as a great historical disruptive event. 'Baby boomers' were born between 1946 and 1964 and their generation is marked by post-war economic development and accompanying social changes. 'Generation X' refers to citizens born between 1965 and 1983, who experienced the transition from the television age to the Internet age. The youngest generation, 'Millennials', have been born from 1984 to present time. This generation has been socialized in a media-rich environment, with the Internet and digital technologies. This kind of operationalization is used in social research in different sociocultural contexts and often in marketing research and in media (Aroldi and Colombo, 2007; Diehl *et al.*, 2018; Westlund and Weibull, 2013; Zukin *et al.* 2006). This categorization follows the events which were important in different contexts - World War II, the subsequent economic growth and social changes, and the introduction of new media technologies. However, one can ask what American and Croatian Millennials have in common, and whether people born over a time span of twenty or thirty years can really share a common generational experience? Using this kind of operationalization is criticized as being superficial, defining generation primarily through age, assuming that groups of people born in such large spans of time share something in common, and referring mainly to American experience, disregarding geographical differences (Aroldi and Colombo, 2007; Westlund and Weibull, 2013). The choice of this kind of operationalization is a shortcoming of this research, and one can say that the concept of generation is used here more as a heuristic notion, rather than it provides a more nuanced generational analysis. Nevertheless, in the absence of other available categories specific for the Croatian society, this widely used categorization is adopted.

W. Lance Bennett *et al.* (2009) suggest two main types of citizenship divided across generational lines. 'Dutiful citizens' feel a sense of duty towards the Government; they vote, trust media and follow news. 'Actualizing citizens' are critical towards the Government and institutions, engage in protest and lifestyle politics, and follow digital media (Bennett *et al.*, 2009: 107). 'Millennials' are found to engage in news consumption by following multiple platforms, "snacking" news as "information is consumed in smaller amounts through a variety of technical modalities" (Diehl *et al.*, 2018: 16). Newer research confirms generational changes in news consumption and political engagement – multi-platform use and digital media relate to youth civic engagement (Diehl *et al.*, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2013).

## METHODOLOGY, DATA AND SAMPLE

The main aim of the analysis is descriptive and explanatory. In the first step, it will compare three generational groups, 'Millennials', 'Generation X' and 'Baby boomers' in their attitudes towards news and sources they use for news consumption. The first part of the analysis will be done with descriptive statistics in SPSS, and statistical significance of differences between groups will be confirmed with ANOVA and Chi-square tests. The second step of the analysis uses latent class analysis to explore the types and structure

of news repertoires of digital news audiences. Based on the presented theoretical framework, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

*RQ1: What are the differences in news consumption between the three generations of media users?*

*RQ2: What types of news repertoires can be identified?*

*RQ3: What is the structure of news repertoires in terms of socio-demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of audiences?*

The analysis is based on data from the *Reuters Digital News Survey* of 2018 (commissioned by the *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*).<sup>3</sup> The online survey was conducted by *YouGov* at the end of January and at the beginning of February 2018. As the aim of the study was to analyze news consumption, the authors of the survey filtered out respondents who said that they had not consumed any news in the past month. Sample size is 2010, which is representative of the population of Internet users in Croatia. Gender groups are evenly distributed in the sample (49,7% male and 50,3% female). The average age in the sample is  $M=45,33$ . Most of the respondents in the sample come from Continental Croatia (28,5%) and the city of Zagreb (20,8%). Most of them completed secondary or high school (44,2%), have yearly income from 10000 to 19999 HRK (14,2%) and declare themselves to be politically in the center (20%).<sup>4</sup> As data refer only to Internet users who consumed at least some news in the past month, they might be skewed in comparison to the general population, representing younger cohorts of citizens with higher socioeconomic status and with higher political interest. Internet penetration has risen in Croatia – in 2018, 82% of households had access to the Internet, in comparison to 2013 when only 65% of households had Internet access (Eurostat, 2018).

## MEASURES

The following variables are used in two steps of the analysis:

*Gender:* A dichotomous variable with values: 1 = male; 2 = female.

*Generations.* 'Dutiful citizens' were born before 1946 (in this sample citizens who are 73 and older); 'Baby boomers' between 1946 and 1964 (in this sample those between the ages of 54 and 72); and 'Generation X' between 1965 and 1983 (between the ages of 35 and 53). 'Millennials' have been born from 1984 to present time (the age of 34 and younger). In the sample there were only twelve respondents belonging to 'dutiful citizens', so they were merged with 'Baby boomers', representing the oldest generation of users.

<sup>3</sup> For detailed explanation of *Digital News Survey* methodology and limitations, see: <http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/survey/2018/survey-methodology-2018/>

<sup>4</sup> Survey data from the *Ivo Pilar Institute for Social Science*, collected in 2016 (N=750), show that 24,9% of the respondents position themselves in the political center, 20,9% as politically left-wing, 37,8% as politically right-wing, and 16,2% did not give an answer (source: <http://barometar.pilar.hr/rezultati-2016/politi%C4%8Dke-orijentacije-i-izbor/osnovne-orijentacije.html>). Duško Sekulić (2016) confirms a strong domination of political center in self-reported answers from survey respondents from 2006 to 2014.

*Income.* A variable with an eighteen-value scale ranging from 1 (less than 10000 Croatian Kuna, or HRK a year), to 9 (80000 to 89999 HRK a year) to 18 (500000 HRK and more) with the question: "What is the total amount of income of your household from all sources?" The answer "Don't know / Don't want to answer" was recoded as system missing ( $M=7,16$ ,  $SD=4,67$ ).

*Education:* An eight-value scale with the question "What is your highest level of education?" with answers on the scale ranging from 1 ("I am currently in school / full-time education") to 6 (Masters or Doctoral degree) ( $M=3,92$ ,  $SD=1,37$ ).

*Political leaning.* A variable on a six-value scale ranging from 1 (Very left-wing) to 6 (Very right-wing). Value 4 denotes political center ( $M=3,46$ ,  $SD=1,63$ ).

*News access.* The question was posed as "Typically, how often do you access news? By news we mean national, international, regional/local news and other topical events accessed via any platform". The variable is in a ten-point scale, from 1 (Never) to 5 (2-3 days a week) to 10 (More than 10 times a day) ( $M=8,02$ ,  $SD=1,4$ ).

*Interest in news.* The question was posed as "How, if at all, would you say you are interested in news?" ( $M=3,6$ ,  $SD=0,81$ ). The variable has a five-value scale: from 1 (Not at all interested), to 3 (Somewhat interested), to 5 (Extremely interested).

*Interest in news about politics.* A variable with a five-value scale: 1 (Not at all interested), to 3 (Somewhat interested), to 5 (Extremely interested), with the question "How, if at all, would you say you are interested in news about politics?" ( $M=3,06$ ,  $SD=1,01$ ).

*News trust.* Operationalized with a five-scale variable from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). "We will ask you about how much you trust the news as a whole in your country. Indicate your level of agreement." ( $M=3$ ,  $SD=1,03$ ).

*Concern about fake news.* Respondents were offered the following statement: "Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the Internet.". They reported their level of agreement on a five-point scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) ( $M=3,40$ ,  $SD=1,04$ ).

*News literacy.* Constructed as a composite index based on correct answers to the following questions: "1) Which of the following news outlets does NOT depend primarily on advertising for financial support? 2) Which of the following is typically responsible for writing a press release? 3) How are most individual decisions about what news stories to show people on Facebook made?". The final composite variable ranges from value 0 (none of the questions were answered correctly) to 3 (all were answered correctly) ( $M=2,03$ ,  $SD=0,93$ ).

*News repertoires* are based on twenty-six dichotomous categories (the answer to the question "Which, if any, of the following have you used to access news in the last week?").

Respondents were able to choose between different traditional and digital media brands and social media. The news sources included in the analysis had at least 12% of audiences, and the two top social media were also included (the entire list of news sources is listed in Table 4.).

## ASPECTS OF NEWS CONSUMPTION ACROSS GENERATIONS

The differences in attitudes about news between three generations are shown in Table 1. ANOVA test found that generations differ significantly in frequency of access to news ( $F(2,1999)=4,6$ ,  $p < .05$ ), interest in news ( $F(2,2003)=7,6$ ,  $p < .01$ ), interest in political news ( $F(2,2002)=44,93$ ,  $p < .001$ ), concern about fake news ( $F(2,2007)=5,24$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and news literacy ( $F(2,2007)=5,54$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, the three generations do not differ significantly in different aspects of news consumption. On average, audiences access news between two and five times a day and are to a certain extent interested in news. Millennial audiences access news slightly less and are less interested in news and news about politics. They have lower trust in news. They express a slightly higher concern about fake news, but they also score lower in news literacy compared to Generation X.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations. News consumption across three generations

	News access	Interest in news	Interest in political news	News trust	Concern about fake news	News Literacy
Millennials						
M (SD)	7,89 (1,65)	3,49 (0,89)	2,78 (1,1)	2,94 (1,07)	3,5 (1,09)	2,05 (0,99)
Generation X						
M (SD)	8,13 (1,41)	3,65 (0,79)	3,05 (0,99)	3,04 (1,03)	3,31 (1,05)	2,12 (0,96)
Baby boomers and older						
M (SD)	8,01 (1,2)	3,64 (0,76)	3,29 (0,91)	3,02 (0,99)	3,39 (0,99)	1,95 (0,87)
Total						
M (SD)	8,02 (1,41)	3,60 (0,81)	3,07 (1,01)	3,00 (1,03)	3,40 (1,04)	2,03 (0,93)

Generational cohorts differ in main sources of news consumption. Millennials use television ( $\chi^2=27,35$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p < .001$ ), radio ( $\chi^2=28,18$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and digital-born news ( $\chi^2=23,1$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p < .001$ ) significantly less than Generation X and Baby boomers. Television is an important source of news for all generational groups, and by far the most important one for Baby boomers. Unlike comparative studies have found, Millennials do not consume printed newspapers significantly less than older generations. They are, however, significantly more avid social media consumers ( $\chi^2=110,2$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Social media represent the most important news source for them. Another significant difference between generations is in their use of digital editions of newspapers. These are used the most by Generation X ( $\chi^2=8,57$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p < .05$ , while television and radio news, digital editions and websites are used more by Millennials ( $\chi^2=11,98$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Table 2. Percentage of audiences using different platforms as news source

Television news bulletins or programs	Radio news bulletins or programs	Printed newspapers	Websites/apps of newspapers	Website/apps of television or radio companies	Other news websites	Social media
Millennials						
67,6%	21%	41%	56,3%	33,2%	45,8%	69,7%
Generation X						
75,3%	23,9%	43%	62,8%	30,9%	59%	56%
Baby boomers						
80%	33%	42,1%	55,7%	25%	49,5%	41,1%

### LATENT CLASS ANALYSIS

Latent class analysis is a person-oriented statistical technique used to determine 'classes' or clusters of subjects depending on their shared traits (Collins and Lanza, 2010). In that way, it is possible to define latent categories of behavior, preferences or attitudes, by calculating likelihood of subjects to have these traits. For example, it has been used to identify types of alcohol consumption among youth (experimenting, thrill seeking, relaxing) based on behavior or motivations of subjects (Collins and Lanza, 2010: 5). It is similar to factor analysis but does not result in interval variables which represent latent dimensions. It results in categorical variables which refer to the 'qualitative differences between groups of people' (Ruscio and Ruscio, 2008, as quoted in Collins and Lanza, 2010: 6). As it seeks similarities or correlations between respondents based on selected variables, it resembles cluster analysis as well. However, while cluster analysis groups respondents into fixed categories, latent class analysis allows fuzzy or latent groups, so respondents can have multiple probabilities of their membership of certain classes (Collins and Lanza, 2010). The number of classes or groups of respondents in LCA is determined according to goodness of fit criteria. Commonly used are the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC). The AIC and BIC determine the number of classes based on model fit and parsimony, whereas "a smaller value represents a more optimal balance of model fit and parsimony; thus, a model with the minimum AIC or BIC might be selected" (Collins and Lanza, 2010: 88). The BIC was confirmed to be a better indicator for determining the number of classes than AIC and is more often used as the goodness of fit criterium (Collins and Lanza, 2010). Latent class analysis was conducted with the R software, by means of the package poLCA, for defining news repertoires. Twenty-six variables representing different news sources were used for LCA. Besides these media use variables, theoretically defined covariates capable of shaping the structure of classes (repertoires) were introduced to the analysis. These covariates were gender, generations, income, education, political leaning, political news interest and news trust.

## RESULTS: TYPOLOGY OF DIGITAL NEWS REPERTOIRES

Before determining the structure of latent classes, the number of latent classes or groups must be determined according to statistical criteria. The model was run several times, starting with the model of two classes and gradually increasing the number of classes to analyze the fitness of the model. The recommended coefficient for assessing the model is the BIC, with the lowest value indicating the model with the best fit. In this analysis, the BIC was the lowest in the five-class model (see Table 3 below). The five-class model is also more parsimonious and easier to interpret, which amounts to the additional criteria recommended for the decision on the number of classes (Collins and Lanza, 2010). Therefore, the five-class model was chosen, which also corresponds to some solutions of news repertoires given in previous analyses (as Strömbäck *et al.*, 2018 also notice).

Table 3. LCA goodness of fit criteria for the number of classes

	AIC	BIC
Two-class model	44670.36	44996.07
Three-class model	44205.02	44717.62
Four-class model	43901.75	44601.23
Five-class model	43666.99	<b>44553.35</b>
Six-class model	43486.25	44559.5
Seven-class model	<b>43303.72</b>	44563.85

Five latent classes were labeled according to predominant news sources corresponding to these classes: 'minimalists', 'digital-born users', 'traditionalists', 'commercial media users' and 'eclectics'. Characteristics of latent classes are presented in Table 4., which shows the probabilities of using a certain news source for each latent class, as well as in the text below. The relationship of classes with covariates is presented in Table 5. which demonstrates how socio-demographic variables structure news repertoires. The composition of news repertoires could be drawn through the axis traditional/digital and omnivorous/univore consumption, as news consumption mostly differs according to the orientation towards traditional or digital media or a wider or narrower range of sources for consumption. Bos *et al.*'s study (2016) of news repertoires in the Netherlands establishes that public television cuts across them. In this sample, public media do not hold a similar 'unifying' role in news repertoires. However, although audiences are fragmented according to sources of news, there is more than a 50% probability that they will turn to popular (commercial) television channels for news across almost all news repertoires, except minimalists who are less likely to turn to television news. Other 'unifying forces' among different news repertoires are *Facebook* as a gateway to other news sites and the digital-born media outlet *Index.hr*. This finding is in accordance with research which suggests that audiences, although fragmented, tend to choose known and popular media rather than new and niche media (Nelson and Taneja, 2018). The following text will describe characteristics of each news repertoire, in order of their audience size.

Table 4. The likelihood of using a certain media for news consumption across five repertoires

News repertoire (predicted class membership)	Minimalists (32%)	Traditionalists (23%)	Commercial media users (19%)	Digital-born users (14%)	Eclectics (12%)
<i>RTL</i>	0,45	0,54	0,73	0,64	0,88
<i>Nova tv</i>	0,46	0,64	0,72	0,59	0,91
<i>N1</i>	0,04	0,22	0,03	0,21	0,26
<i>HTV</i>	0,27	0,72	0,46	0,40	0,73
<i>HR</i>	0,19	0,49	0,27	0,24	0,58
<i>Otvoreni radio</i>	0,19	0,12	0,34	0,30	0,44
<i>Narodni radio</i>	0,12	0,09	0,32	0,09	0,41
<i>Antena radio</i>	0,08	0,10	0,17	0,15	0,32
<i>Večernji list</i>	0,07	0,38	0,22	0,05	0,58
<i>Jutarnji list</i>	0,11	0,54	0,24	0,23	0,69
<i>24 sata</i>	0,19	0,29	0,70	0,11	0,73
<i>Vijesti.hrt.hr</i>	0,03	0,20	0,14	0,07	0,46
<i>Dnevnik.hr</i>	0,16	0,34	0,56	0,37	0,87
<i>Vijesti.rtl.hr</i>	0,05	0,13	0,24	0,19	0,54
<i>Slobodnadalmacija.hr</i>	0,14	0,11	0,08	0,25	0,35
<i>Večernji.hr</i>	0,18	0,58	0,29	0,92	0,85
<i>Jutarnji.hr</i>	0,09	0,46	0,21	0,68	0,79
<i>24sata.hr</i>	0,32	0,37	0,78	0,71	0,90
<i>Telegram.hr</i>	0,07	0,07	0,12	0,48	0,44
<i>Index.hr</i>	0,41	0,49	0,56	0,91	0,89
<i>Net.hr</i>	0,25	0,34	0,46	0,63	0,79
<i>Tportal.hr</i>	0,15	0,36	0,39	0,75	0,85
<i>Dnevno.hr</i>	0,06	0,25	0,23	0,27	0,58
<i>Direktno.hr</i>	0,04	0,19	0,14	0,14	0,38
<i>Youtube</i>	0,19	0,30	0,34	0,24	0,51
<i>Facebook</i>	0,50	0,52	0,73	0,52	0,72

*Minimalists* have the narrowest news diet, the lowest probabilities of using media as sources of news. The prevalence of users with lower news use (either labeled as 'news avoiders' or 'minimalists') is shown in previous research (e.g. in Bos et al., Edgerly et al., 2015, 2018, Lee and Yang, 2014, Strömbäck et al., 2018). The largest share of digital news users in Croatia is also likely to belong to this category (32%). They are oriented mostly towards social media and commercial television channels. As the relationship with covariates is calculated as logistic regression, minimalists serve as a reference category to which all

other repertoires are contrasted to. Minimalists are the category with the lowest interest in political news compared to all other categories (see Table 5). These news consumers are younger than traditionalist and digital-born users, but do not differ significantly from commercial media users and eclectics. Therefore, among Millennials there is a greater likelihood of minimalists and commercial users to be found.

*Traditionalists* are the second largest group (23%) who use more media sources than minimalists, although, overall, they have a less diverse news media diet compared to other groups. They focus strongly on public and commercial television and are, compared to all other groups, more likely to consume daily newspapers and printed news magazines, not substituting these traditional sources as more digitally oriented users. Public television and radio have an important position in their news repertoire. When it comes to digital media, they navigate to digital editions of traditional media. These users differ significantly from minimalists in their characteristics. Compared to minimalists, they are more likely to be male, more educated, more right-wing leaning and with a higher interest in political news. They are also more likely to belong to Generation X or Baby boomers' generation.

*Commercial media users* (19% of digital news consumers are likely to belong to this group) also have a slightly narrower repertoire of news sources. They tend to focus on commercial television channels and tabloids in their printed or digital form. Social media hold an important position in their news repertoire, and they are more likely to consume news from commercial radio stations. These are younger and less educated audiences that have a slightly higher interest in political news and higher trust in news compared to minimalists.

*Digital-born users* (14%) focus mainly on digital media sources, although they have not abandoned traditional media. These are the strongest consumers of certain digital-born media brands and digital editions of news dailies. They focus on television but share with minimalists the lowest probability of informing themselves from print media. Although, unlike minimalists, they fill this gap with digital media, they do not consume such a wide array of digital news as eclectics. Their news choice is more selective and certain quality news brands have a relatively important position in their repertoire. These users have a higher probability of belonging to Generation X, have a slightly higher income, and are politically more left-wing leaning and interested in news about politics than minimalists.

*Eclectics* are the smallest (12%) group of users with an omnivorous news media diet, combining traditional and digital, lighter and more serious news sources. They are strong users of digital and social media, but without abandoning traditional sources. These users do not differ from minimalists in most of the socio-demographic characteristics. Interest in political news and higher trust in news is the strongest covariate of this news repertoire. However, it is unclear if this eclecticism can be defined necessarily as higher sophistication in news consumption. Highest trust in news could also point to a lack of critical thinking and news literacy. These users have the highest probability of using *Dnevno.hr*, a digital-born media outlet which tends to publish a mix of sensationalism, misinformation and

bizarre content.<sup>5</sup> Jacob L. Nelson and Harsh Taneja (2018) found that the misinformation audiences in the USA are heavy digital media users who, besides popular media outlets, also choose niche media and fake news sites. On the other hand, similar omnivorous repertoire found in the USA is peculiar in terms of its socio-demographic profile and seems to cut across the ideological poles (Edgerly, 2015). The authors suggest that there may be some personality traits which explain this repertoire, like open-mindedness, which make them more prone to explore news from various sources (Edgerly, 2015: 15).

Table 5. Socio-demographic and political interest covariates predicting news repertoires

	Digital-born users/ Minimalists	Traditionalists/ Minimalists	Commercial users/ Minimalists	Eclectics/ Minimalists
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Intercept	-8,01 (1,5)	-7,80 (1,3)	-0,84 (0,94)	-6,75 (1,02)
Gender	-0,25 (0,23)	-0,90 (0,23) ***	0,15 (0,24)	-0,06 (0,24)
Generation X	2,02 (0,47) ***	1,16 (0,39) **	-0,08 (0,26)	0,15 (0,3)
Baby boomers	1,53 (0,47) **	1,53 (0,37) ***	-1,23 (0,31) ***	-0,35 (0,3)
Income	0,07 (0,02) **	0,02 (0,02)	-0,03 (0,02)	0 (0,03)
Education	0,07 (0,09)	0,21 (0,09) *	-0,33 (0,09) ***	0,04 (0,08)
Political leaning	-0,33 (0,09) ***	0,21 (0,07) **	0,25 (0,07) **	0,14 (0,08)
Political news interest	0,74 (0,13) ***	0,9 (0,14) ***	0,53 (0,12) ***	1,32 (0,13) ***
News trust	0,14 (0,11)	0,14 (0,11)	0,27 (0,11) *	0,40 (0,11) ***

\* p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This article builds on the growing research on news repertoires and seeks to explore patterns of news consumption primarily across generations. Research which deals with implications of news media use, and especially news repertoires, has so far mostly been undertaken in rich and developed media environments. News repertoires research in different media environments discovered a certain type of minimal media users, which tends to be the largest group of news consumers. Traditional media users, digital media users and omnivore or eclectic users are also found in different media environments. There are serious democratic implications of such trends. As media environments become more diversified and offer more choice, selectivity of consumers plays an increasingly important role in creating strong divides in news consumption. Age, socioeconomic

<sup>5</sup> So far, there has not been an extensive analysis of misinformation in Croatia. Croatia does not have a list of misinformation sites, like *OpenSources* in the USA (Nelson and Taneja 2018). *OpenSources* is managed by a research team which classifies news sources into 'fake', 'satire', 'hate' and 'clickbait' (Nelson and Taneja, 2018: 3725). However, *Dnevno.hr* has a recorded history of spread of misinformation. *The Croatian Journalist Association's Council of Honor* often publishes reactions to *Dnevno.hr* spread of misinformation and hate speech. Several stories from this news site have been debunked by the fact-checking website *Faktograf.hr* (false information and various conspiracy theories concerning vaccination, migrations and international organizations).

status and especially political interest turn out to be increasingly important factors for driving the selection of news (Bergström *et al.*, 2019). This would mean that with time there are more and more citizens who disconnect from the public sphere, leaving only citizens highly interested in politics being more engaged.

This research has mostly confirmed trends found in other media environments. Out of the five news repertoires discovered ('minimalists', 'digital-born users', 'traditionalists', 'commercial media users' and 'eclectics'), minimalists are the group to which the largest share of citizens are likely to belong to. Belonging to minimalists is mostly driven by generational belonging and interest in political news. This finding is in accordance with previous research which found that audiences with low news use (minimalists or news avoiders) are a growing group of users (Blekesaune *et al.*, 2012; Prior, 2007; Strömbäck *et al.*, 2018) and that age (Bergström *et al.*, 2019) and especially motivational factors, such as interest in politics, play a more important role in environments with abundant media supply (Strömbäck *et al.*, 2013). Millennials are most likely to consume news in a manner of minimalists – having the poorest news diet and being oriented mostly towards social media and commercial television channels as sources of news. Millennial audiences access news slightly less. They are somewhat less interested in news and news about politics, have lower trust in news and express a slightly higher concern about fake news. Commercial media users are also more likely to be younger. They engage with fewer sources of news, and focus on social media, commercial television channels, radio and tabloids. These users are less educated but have higher interest in political news and news trust than minimalists.

On the opposite side of minimalists, there are consumers with the highest interest in political news who consume a wide range of news. Eclectics are news seekers who combine traditional and digital, lighter and more serious news sources, and are heavy users of social media. This smallest group of news users shows that social media do not necessarily produce 'filter bubbles' but are also able to expand the news choice for those with high political interest. Unfortunately, this analysis was not able to evaluate what sort of engagement with news these users have. Are they 'news snackers' who consume fast and fragmented bits of information (Diehl *et al.*, 2018), are they 'heavy digital users' who uncritically consume also misinformation (Nelson and Taneja, 2018) or 'open-minded news seekers' engaging with different information sources (Edgerly, 2015)? These users are more difficult to define in terms of socio-demographic characteristics. They do not significantly differ from minimalists in any socio-demographic characteristic, which would suggest that they are also younger users. They are not significantly more educated than minimalists, but they are significantly driven by motivational factors – they are more interested and have higher trust in news. This is certainly a news repertoire which is worth further exploration in future research.

Generation X and Baby boomers are more likely to be traditionalists and digital-born news users. These users are more politically defined – traditionalists lean to the political right, while digital-born news users lean to the left. It is well known that citizens become more politically interested with age (Norris, 2003), which explains stronger

identifications with political ideologies. Digital-born users have a slightly larger income, while traditionalists are more educated. Both these groups have higher interest in news about politics compared to minimalists.

Audiences in Croatia are clearly fragmented. However, some media cut across news repertoires groups – popular television channels, *Facebook* and digital-born *Index.hr* are likelier to be consumed by various types of digital news audiences. Unlike certain Western Europe countries in which public media unify the fragmented public sphere (Bos *et al.*, 2016), this is not the case with the public media in Croatia. They are likelier to be consumed by traditionalists and eclectics, rather than by other groups of consumers. Previous research found that Croatian public media attract more right-wing audiences instead of ideologically diverse citizens (Peruško and Vozab, 2017). Besides the challenge of being more politically inclusive, the public media will have to tackle the challenge of attracting younger audiences and minimalists to serve in public interest.

There are several limitations to this research. The analysis focuses on survey data representative of Internet users who consume news. For this reason, the analyzed sample might be skewed to represent more affluent, educated and interested audiences than the general population. The questionnaire was designed to collect self-reported media use from respondents, which is problematic as audiences tend to overstate their media use, especially that which is perceived as socially desirable. Finally, news consumption is important for its interaction with political knowledge or participation as indices of active and informed citizenship. Unfortunately, these variables were not present in the analyzed sample. This kind of analysis is therefore left for of future research.

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# GENERACIJSKI OBRASCI KONZUMACIJE DIGITALNIH VIJESTI: OD TRADICIONALISTA DO MILENIJSKIH MINIMALISTA

Dina Vozab

**SAŽETAK** *Digitalno okruženje visokog izbora (Prior, 2007; Van Aelst i sur., 2017) dovodi do fragmentirane i polarizirane konzumacije vijesti. Pojam informativnih repertoara uveden je kako bi se analizirale medijske upotrebe u krosmedijskom okruženju. Otkriveni su raznoliki informativni repertoari u različitim zemljama, ovisno o dobi i socioekonomskom statusu, koji utječu na političko znanje i participaciju (Diehl i sur., 2018; Edgerly i sur., 2018; Strömbäck i sur., 2018; Wolfsfeld i sur., 2016). Cilj ovog istraživanja jest identificirati različite informativne repertoare u Hrvatskoj i testirati učinke generacijske pripadnosti i socioekonomskog statusa na formiranje tih repertoara. Pokazalo se s vremenom da su dob i politički interes važniji prediktori sve raznolikije i polariziranije konzumacije vijesti (Bergström i sur., 2019; Strömbäck i sur., 2013). Ova studija raspravlja o međuodnosu između sociodemografskih faktora i političkog interesa u oblikovanju konzumacije vijesti među različitim generacijama. Analiza se temelji na podacima iz istraživanja Reuters Digital News Survey provedenog u Hrvatskoj 2018. godine. Analiza latentnih klasa s kovarijatima koji ih oblikuju korištena je za identifikaciju informativnih repertoara. Analiza je rezultirala identifikacijom pet informativnih repertoara: minimalisti, korisnici digitalnih medija, tradicionalisti, korisnici komercijalnih medija i eklektici.*

## KLJUČNE RIJEČI

PUBLIKE, FRAGMENTACIJA, INFORMATIVNI REPERTOARI, GENERACIJE, POLITIČKI INTERES

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# GENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF DIGITAL LITERACY AMONG GHANAIS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: WITHER NOW?

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**ABSTRACT** *This paper investigates the nexus between generations and digital literacy. For the study, simple random sampling was undertaken in selecting 361 respondents, while ten participants were selected through purposive sampling. The authors made use of mixed methods, including the interview survey method. The data were subjected to bivariate, correlation and thematic analysis. Concerning the results, younger people turn out to be comparatively more digitally active and more digitally skilled than older people, which is indicative of the fact that there is a generational gap between the two distinct generations in terms of being in a technologically savvy position. This was influenced significantly by the era in which they were born, as each generation comes with its own technological innovations, the phenomena of socialization and social interaction with self-organization as the focus. It is concluded that digital literacy, expositions and exploits are significant in relation to how they shape generational interactions, including the adaptation to digital device utilization in later life.*

## KEYWORDS

GENERATIONS, DIGITAL SKILLS, SOCIAL INTERACTION, SOCIALIZATION, HEALTH, DIGITAL DEVICE

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## INTRODUCTION

Digital literacy comprises the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills related to effective and appropriate use of technology. According to Paul Gilster (1997), digital literacy is the ability to understand and to use information from a variety of digital sources, as required by the new digital age. Kate Pahl argues that the “stuff” of digital literacies is materialized in smartphones, screens, tablets, and other complex digital literacy artifacts that spill into the ‘stuff’ of everyday life” (Pahl, 2014: 173). Julian McDougall *et al.* (2018: 3) outlined three main research fields which provided the conceptual framework and approaches to his project, namely ‘Digital Literacy’, ‘The Third Space’, and ‘Uses (of Digital Literacy)’. The first includes work on the relationship between technology and learning, where learning entails identity work and civic engagement; the second provides ways of understanding geographies of activity and the blurred boundaries between these territories; and the third provides a lens through which sense is made of the range of things that people do with digital technology. Of these, the uses of digital literacy dimension are significant for this paper.

As Robert Hoggart (1957) observes, there is a duality of uses in the digital age. Other uses encompass the following: educational/academic interventions that range from addressing competency gaps to co-creative, participatory projects seeking to utilize digital literacy for constructivist pedagogic means and more ethnographic work seeking to explore how digital practices integrate with socio-cultural factors and personal narratives (see Livingstone and Sefton-Green, 2016); economic/employability interventions aimed at increasing digital literacy competencies for accessing services, benefits and trainings and the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace practices, whilst civic engagement/societal well-being initiatives attempt to use digital literacy as a conduit for participation in democracy or accessing public services (*e.g.*, Nuffield Trust, 2016). This may be facilitated by social interaction and socialization.

Alton Chua (2002) and Delali Adjoa Dovie (2019a, 2019b) have observed that social interaction occurs in a myriad of settings, namely informal networks formed in organizations, within community practice, informal chats during social events, interpersonal relationships and everyday sense making activities among individuals, even in group settings. Social interaction refers to meaningful dialogue (Hurst *et al.*, 2013) among individuals. Social interaction can enhance good health through a positive influence on people’s living habits. The emotional support provided by social connections helps to reduce the damaging effects of stress and can foster ‘a sense of meaning and purpose in life’ (Park *et al.*, 2010: 6). Social interaction improves or enhances knowledge or literacy (critical thinking) and problem-solving skills (Hurst *et al.*, 2013). It is vital to the process of learning.

Socialization refers to the ways through which people interact with others to acquire knowledge, attitudes and behaviors essential for onward effective participation in society (Dzorgbo, 2008: 97). Socialization occurs throughout the entire life course. There are five dimensions to socialization – primary socialization, secondary socialization, re-

socialization, anticipatory socialization and adult socialization (Dzorgbo, 2008; Dovie, 2017). It has to do with the exposure to digital literacy and the associated competences. Of these, adult socialization is applicable in the context of this paper.

## DIGITAL LITERACY RESEARCH APPLIED TO GHANA

There are reports that a significant gap in supply and demand exists across all levels of digital skills in the sub-Saharan Africa region, with a lower availability of skills than in other markets and significant gaps in supply of intermediate and advanced skills. *L.E.K* and the *International Financial Corporation (IFC)* (2019) note that there is a need to increase the supply of digitally-skilled labor in Sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana in order to meet anticipated labor market needs. Companies are already turning abroad in search of talent, while governments have taken steps to integrate information and communication technologies (ICT) in education, yet with insufficient policy response. Demand for digital skills in Sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana is powered both by latent economic growth and the digitization and automation of agriculture, manufacturing as well as services.

It is noteworthy that the need to ensure new or expanded digital skills training is aligned to industry. Ultimately, these new skills must be integrated into the curriculum at an early age in order to ensure that the topic becomes as ingrained as reading, math (including critical thinking), decision-making, team work and a host of others. Such skills will ensure that humans can adapt and transform in a digitally-enabled future. Appropriate public and private sector education stewards and systems will meet the existing challenge. Ghana's ability to take advantage of the digital opportunity to become more competitive and prosperous depends largely on whether the human capital – its population's health, skills, knowledge, experience, and habits – keeps up with workforce transformational dynamics. As a point of fact, digital skills are an essential part of that human capital development and paramount to future success (*L.E.K* and *IFC*, 2019).

Digital skills refer to skills related to the use of technology (*L.E.K* and *IFC*, 2019). Digital literacy skills have been categorized into three categories: basic, intermediate and advanced skills. Of these, basic digital skills, being entry-level functional skills required to make rudimentary use of digital devices and applications (*UNESCO*, 2017), are imperative. This is the focus of this study, especially among Ghanaian younger and older people, particularly the latter.

The 2012 *RIA Ghana Survey* found that a majority (70.5%) of respondents, who have access to the Internet first gained access through desktop computers or laptops, and a minority (29.5%) first gained access through a mobile handset (*Frempong*, 2012). *Godfred Frempong* demonstrates that computer access provides opportunities to access the Internet for various activities and services, including social networking, governance, education, health, commerce and other online services. Also, the capacity to utilize digital skills is, to some extent, dependent on the population's literacy levels, due to the fact that some level of literacy is required to understand and use computer technology. In addition,

Frempong (2012) opines that many Ghanaians are participating in social networks. Among those who connect to the Internet, 81% are signed up to at least one social network. *Facebook* is the most popular social networking site in Ghana.

It has been observed that over the past eight years governments in Ghana have vigorously pursued an ICT in education policy agenda aimed at integrating ICTs in schools (MOE, 2008). Information and Communication Technology resources such as digital technologies and digital information are defining contemporary societies (Quarcoe and Pata, 2015). The benefits of ICT resources on teaching and learning cannot be underestimated, hence the awakening of governments and institutions to make digital literacy and information literacy the central pivot around which schools' business revolves (Fu, 2013). Therefore, digital literacy should be seen as the very essential prerequisite for individuals to be economically and socially functional (Murray and Perez, 2014). James S. Quarcoe and Kai Pata (2015) explored on a sample of Ghanaian schools regarding the role of the teachers' digital divide in determining the digital divide in the context of public schools. They demonstrated that, in order to ensure digital divide minimization in schools, it is required of teachers to digitally reposition themselves to be able to contribute meaningfully to the development of their unique school digital culture and exhibit literacy skills which embrace digital literacy and information literacy. Increasingly, technology is becoming a driver of learning and growth among young people in school systems all around the world, including Ghana (Thomas, 2017).

The world is technologically advanced in contemporary times, necessitating the need for older people to be equipped digitally to aid access to services and help in general. The challenge is that even though the extended family support system has declined (Doh *et al.*, 2014; Dovie, 2018), it still offers some form of support to older people. However, there are still some older people who live alone, which means that they are exposed to loneliness and helplessness – depending on the situation. The development of an awareness of how a digital environment can assist in self organization and foster links with a variety of spectrums is imperative. Dovie (2019b) has underscored the fact that there is a generational gap between younger and older Ghanaians in terms of digital literacy. Thus, this study seeks to explore the extent of generational digital literacy gap dynamics in Ghana; to investigate the way forward in terms of facilitating a solution to this gap. It also explores the linkage between digital literacy and competence in digital skills regarding digital device usage.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Douglas Belshaw's (2014) digital model separates digital literacy into eight meaningful components. These are as follows: cultural (how to believe); cognitive (how to do); construction (how to use); communication (how to communicate); creative (how to make); critical (how to evaluate); confident (how to belong); civic (how to participate). Belshaw refers to these eight elements as digital literacies. Significantly, the model suits the

premise of this paper best. It is also a suitable learning framework for improvement in digital fluency of both novices and confident learners alike. What is noteworthy is that theoretical elements such as construction; communication; creative were used in the construction of the questionnaire. Belshaw (2014) notes that a 'digitally literate' individual is someone who has a good balance of the eight elements.

The need for the development of the cultural component of digital literacy implies the ability to move easily between different digital environments and use learning technologies in a variety of different contexts, *e.g.*, knowing how to distinguish between using social media for personal and social connections. Cognitively, one needs to know how to use specific tools and technologies that are important for personal development, including those that are specific to more general tools that will make an individual a more digitally literate person. To develop the constructive element, the individual needs to understand and demonstrate how to take existing resources and content and re-use/remix it to create something new for his/her own benefit.

Essentially, there is a need to understand the importance of networks and communication and the significant role they play in the development of digital literacy. This entails understanding the many different ways through which one can communicate by means of different devices, including mobile and other digital devices as well as the development of an understanding of the particular norms, values, protocols and ethics that are appropriate to social networking and other web 2.0 technologies (Belshaw, 2014). A confident user of digital technologies needs to understand and capitalize on the differences between the analogue and digital worlds. This requires the assessment and review of individual competence(s) with digital technologies, managing one's own personal digital learning environment, and developing a community of practice to help progress skills and attributes. Worthy of note is that the digital gap affects communication across generational, cultural and ethnic groups, and digital inequalities in access and skills (Norris, 2001; Hargittai, 2002) may develop into social inequalities (*e.g.*, van Deursen and van Dijk, 2014). Further, several conceptualizations of the digital divide exist (DiMaggio and Hargittai, 2001; Norris, 2001). More often than not, conceptualizations generally identify four areas of importance: attitudes, access, skills, and types of usage. Skills and usage access is the focus of this paper and entails the purpose of the whole process of technology appropriation. Jan A.G.M. Van Dijk (2005) argues that the conditions of having sufficient motivation, physical or material access, and skills to apply digital media need to be met, yet, these may not be sufficient conditions for actual use. Even if differences in terms of physical access have diminished, significant differences may remain in terms of differential skills and the nature of Internet use (Hargittai and Hinnant, 2008; Van Dijk, 2005; Zillien and Hargittai, 2009). Van Dijk (2005). Moreover, Zillien and Hargittai (2009) have observed that the intensive and extensive nature of Internet use among the well-off and well-educated is indicative of an elite lifestyle from which those with less capital are marginalized.

## METHODS

This study used quantitative and qualitative datasets and a cross-sectional design to investigate digital literacy, expositions and exploits, and the propensity of it to shape adaptation to digital device utilization in later life. Use was made of the survey data to explore digital literacy among generations in relation to the process of social interaction and socialization, while the interview data explicate the issues raised.

### Site Selection

Accra and Tema situated in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana were chosen as the study sites. Also, they present a web of social relations, occupational diversity, a variety of activities as well as various events over time, which provides richer and more interesting data, and suitability.

### Survey Structure

The survey structure comprised survey methodology, sampling of individual units from the population of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana and associated techniques of survey data collection, such as questionnaire and methods for improving the number and accuracy of survey responses.

The face-to-face survey method was utilized in the study because of its propensity to produce data of high quality to a large extent, barring item non-response as the general concern of the study was to obtain a high response rate (96%).

### Sample Selection

The study adopted the simple random sampling technique in selecting the respondents. This technique of sampling was used for two reasons. First, young people and older adults are distinct groups of study participants. Second, the study intended to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation. For the quantitative data, 361 younger individuals and older adults were selected. The sampling process involved a random sample of individuals aged 18-59 years (181) in the Tema Metropolis and a sample of people aged 60+ (180) from both Accra and Tema Metropolises. The sample was selected from a total population of 4,010,054 of the Greater Accra Region (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 2012) of which Accra and Tema are part and a sample of people aged 60+ (180) from both Accra and Tema Metropolises. The sample size was calculated using the following formula:  $n = 2(Z\alpha + Z1 - \beta)^2 \sigma^2 / \Delta^2$ , with a power of 80% and a constant of 1.65 and a  $p < 0.05$  (Kadam and Bhalerao, 2010). In the case of the qualitative data, ten in-depth interviews were conducted with a section of participants. The sample for the qualitative phase was selected from that used in the quantitative phase, utilizing the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was used for diverse reasons, including its importance in the selection of participants who had specific characteristics, such as sources of information.

Therefore, 361 questionnaires were given out and were returned. Although the sample size was constrained by the resources, 361 observations were selected as adequate for the study. The sample is large enough to help address the research questions accurately. The research objectives of this study include the following: to investigate the generational digital literacy gap between young and old and how to address that; to ascertain the role of social interaction and socialization in fostering generational digital literacy among young and old generations; to outline how generational digital literacy facilitates digital device utilization among older people. The corresponding research questions are: (1) *To what extent can the generational digital literacy gap between young and old generations be mitigated?*; (2) *To what extent does social interaction/socialization facilitate generational digital literacy related skills?*; and (3) *Does generational digital literacy foster digital device utilization?* The study hypothesizes that digital literacy exposition positively correlates with digital device usage among older adults; that social interaction influences digital skills acquisition; and that socialization influences digital skills acquisition.

## RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

### Questionnaire

A questionnaire made up of both closed and open-ended questions was the instrument used for the study. It is noteworthy that theoretical elements such as construction; communication; and creativity were used in the construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire that was used in the process of data collection contained two sections. Section 1 was on socio-demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, including level of education. The second section explored issues pertaining to digital literacy expositions among younger and older individuals, and digital device use propensity among older people, measured with a combination of Carol Barnett and Lisa Ellen Monda-Amaya's (1998) four-point verbalized scale from 'extremely' to 'not at all'; Elizabeth J. Mutran *et al.* (1997) verbalized scale from 'frequently' to 'never'; as well as Douglas A. Hershey and John C. Mowen's (2000) verbalized scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The questionnaire was created on the basis of previous research (Dovie, 2019b), input from colleagues and also the study's research interests. After the initial pool of questions were written, qualified experts reviewed and made suggestions for improvements. To ensure reliability of the instrument, it was pretested on a sample of thirty individuals, following the guidelines proposed by Perneger *et al.*, (2015). Further, a pilot test among the intended respondents for initial validation was undertaken.

Together, these were collectively contextualized to fit this study and the Ghanaian scenario. The survey questionnaire instrument's reliability was ensured in diverse ways, namely, through facilitation by clear instructions and wording of questions. The questionnaire contained standardized instructions, namely "please tick where appropriate." Also, trait sources of error were minimized through interviewing respondents at their convenience. The validity of the survey data was attained following Peter M.

Nardi's (2006) guidelines. The validity of the data was obtained by means of face-to-face interviews. Also, the survey sought an alternative source for confirmation through further in-depth interviews. The face-to-face interviews were conducted in both the English language and Ghanaian languages, namely Ga, Ewe, and Twi.

### **Interviews**

The interviews were designed to gain an understanding of digital literacy expositions among young and old generations, and digital device use propensity among older people. The interviews lasted for approximately 45 minutes. Initially, the researchers reminded participants about the aims of the study. Each in-depth interview took the form of a semi-structured interview and was conducted individually in the participant's office or in any other chosen place. The interviews were audio-taped.

The ten participants were divided into three planned interviews based on their convenience (*i.e.*, participants' preference of time and location). Participants were excluded if they were younger than eighteen years. The interviews were conducted in October 2018, approximately two months after the completion of the questionnaire. The interview themes that emerged were related to the perceptions regarding generational digital literacy, generational digital skill use and the implications of digital device use in one's old age, for instance.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Written informed consent was obtained from each research participant during the process of data collection.

### **Data Analysis**

Methodological triangulation was deployed to include the combination of methods to understand and explain digital literacy expositions among young and old generations and digital device use propensity among older adults. The answered questionnaires were cleaned and serialized for easy identification. The survey data were entered into *Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS)* and were analyzed with selected descriptive statistics, namely frequencies, percentages, Pearson Chi-square and Pearson's Product Moment correlation tests.

The interviews were transcribed mostly along with data collection. The transcripts of the interviews were subjected to thematic analysis. For the interviews, the data analysis was first conducted by the researchers and subsequently by an independent researcher with experience in qualitative data analysis to increase confirmability and dependability. Both researchers ensured dependability by keeping a coding manual, which included original extracts from the interviews and definitions of the emergent themes. Each of the researchers read the scripts in detail, and then individually coded and categorized data from the same interview. The data from the interviews were coded by the researchers and across all the interviews. The data captured diverse views. Through constant comparison,

constant refining resulted in a list of themes (e.g., social interaction, socialization, digital skills) with their importance determined by frequency, multiplicity of participants' views as well as uniqueness.

An inductive thematic analysis using NVivo11 software was undertaken following the steps of Bazeley and Jackson (2014). Nvivo Software was used to facilitate coding text and retrieving coded text as well as to interpret the data. The NVivo software was employed in this study in order to obtain rigor in dealing with such data using six (6) distinct steps. First, there was the creation of a project which comprised all the documents, coding data and related information that assisted in the process of data analysis as well as saving the NVivo project. Second, the transcribed audio-recorded interview files were respectively named. Third, the process of analysis also entailed working with qualitative data files which involved the preparation of documents for import. Subsequently, the requisite documents that were intended to be analyzed were then imported. Fourth, nodes were used, for example, for references in lieu of code text(s). Both tree and free nodes were created and used.

Fifth, in data coding, a chunk of data in a project document under a particular node was taken by highlighting the requisite text using the mouse and pulling the highlighted text to the identified node using the coder. This included finding obvious themes as well as auto-coding. Subsequently, multiple codes were assigned to the same chunk of text while repeating the process. The codes formed a pattern. The passage of texts was compared and contrasted for ways in which they were similar and different. The emergent concepts were, for example, digital literacy and digital skills responses: limited digital literacy skills among older persons, etc. The final step which was aimed at going further in the process of data analysis encompassed the following: the start of analysis, going further with concepts, categories and themes including narratives and discourse. Memos were used to tell the story of the research by adding descriptions. The knowledge developed from the data was reported.

The outcomes of these activities were recorded in discussion memos. The analysis started with a concept. A thematic multi-case analysis was employed, the comparative focus of which was on individual cases including the preservation of their uniqueness.

## RESULTS

### Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study population consisted of males (49.9%) and females (50.1%) aged 18+ years (Table 1.). 58% of the respondents were married. The highest educational level attained by the majority of the respondents (80.3%) was tertiary education, including first and second degrees, and post-graduate diploma. It is worthy of note that the reference universe of the sample is significantly restricted to urban, educated people.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

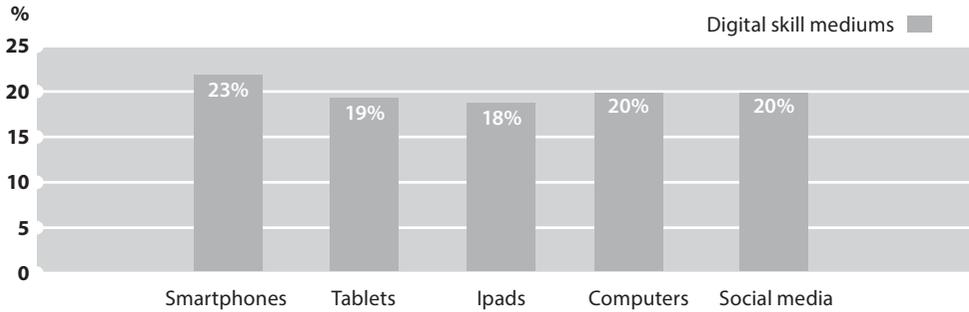
Variables	Characteristics	Percentage (%)
Age	18-29	12.5
	30-39	12.5
	40-49	12.5
	50-59	12.6
	60+	49.9
Sex	Male	49.9
	Female	50.1
Marital status	Married	58.0
	Divorced	23.5
	Widowed	7.5
	Single	11.0
Educational level	Primary	1.03
	JHS/MSLC	5.6
	SHS/Tech/Com/Secretarial	6.3
	GCE O' Level	2.3
	GCE A' Level	4.5
	Bachelor's degree	58.2
	Post-graduate diploma	9.3
Master's degree	12.8	

Source: Field data, 2018.

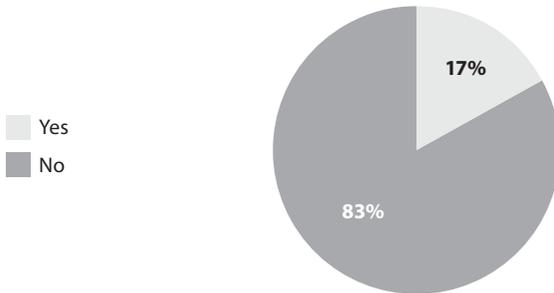
## THE DYNAMICS OF THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Digital skills among younger and older generations can be displayed through mediums such as smartphones (23%), tablets, ipads (18%), computers and social media (Figure 1.). Demographically, the respondents are divided into three categories: 18-39, 40-59, representing the younger people here mentioned, whilst older adults relate to people aged 60+.

In assessing the display of digital skills, the study explored the notion as to whether older people use social media platforms more than younger people and found, on the contrary, with an emphatic no response (83%) (Figure 2.), that younger people utilize social media platforms more than their older generation counterparts.



▲ Figure 1.  
Mediums of Digital Skills among Generations  
Source: Field data, 2018



▲ Figure 2.  
Intergenerational Use of Social Media Platforms  
Source: Field data, 2018

As a result, the qualitative data provide the following observations:

*Aside entertainment, young people use social media platforms in school for academic purposes (Male youth).*

*Basic education on computer literacy should be extended to older generation individuals (Male youth).*

*The older generation was born before digital technological breakthroughs (Female youth).*

*The lack of interest and the complexity of it also pertains (Female older adult).*

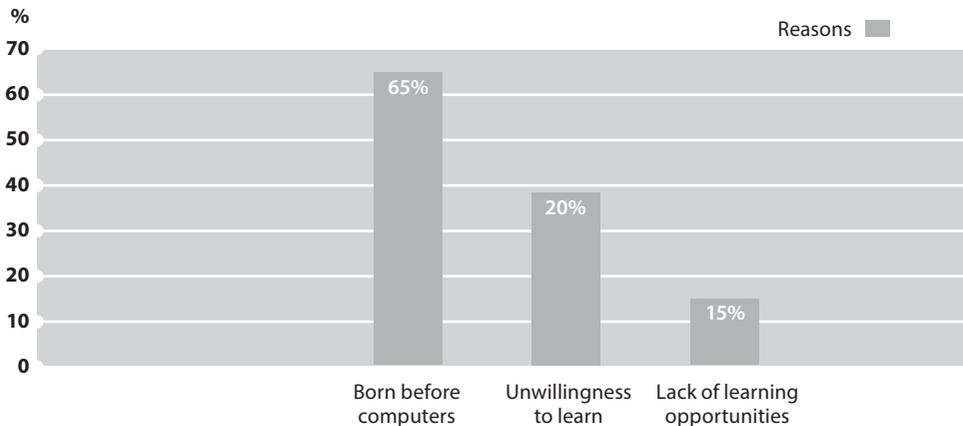
*This is because of constant technological advancement in the past few years (Male older adult).*

In essence, these are reflective of the use of and dependence on digital knowledge.

### Notions of Digital Skills Use

One of the ways of assessing the technological savvy nature of a people was through the use of social media platforms such as *Pinterest, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Google, LinkedIn, and Facebook*. This is reminiscent of the fact that there are a variety of reasons as to why older generations of Ghanaians are not technologically savvy in using social media portals. The reasons are that they were born before computers (BBC) (65%); unwillingness to learn (20%); and lack of the requisite learning opportunities (15%), (Figure 3.). Noteworthy is that the digital literacy related to the generational gap between younger and older generations of Ghanaians may be due to a myriad of factors, namely because each generation comes with its own technological innovations or due to the fact that they were born prior to the advent of digital technological breakthrough. Further, it became popular during the younger generation’s era. This implies that the gap here indicated was historically shaped.

Older adults in this context could then be said to be largely digital illiterates, which implies that they cannot use, communicate and/or participate in digital skills utilization. This contradicts Belshaw’s (2014) use of communication and participation components in the digital platform.



▲ Figure 3.  
Reasons for Older Adults not Being Technologically Savvy on Social Media Portals  
Source: Field data, 2018

The life cycle can be turned to for a possible explanation of the perpetuation of the generational gap. In consequence, the data – ‘yes’ answers (87%) – indicate that the life span can be attributed to the existence of this generational gap of digital literacy between the young and the old (Figure 4.). There are diverse reasons why this is so, including the differences in digital eras. They are summarized in the following quotations:

*Younger people were born during the era of computer invention and were given basic education on it, hence they have encountered computer literacy (Male older adult).*

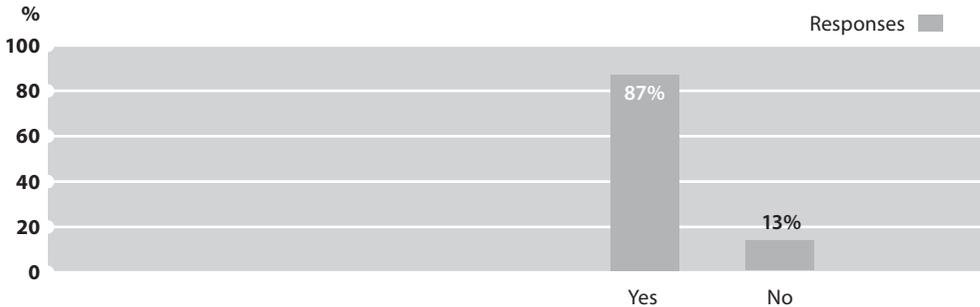
*Older people find it time-wasting and boring (Male youth).*

*If a critical look is taken, this 21<sup>st</sup> century younger people came to meet the computer world, while the older people did not get that chance (Female older adult).*

*Older people do not use social media platforms more than younger people because they do not have time like younger people do (Male youth).*

*The older generation lived most of their lives without the use of digital devices (Female older adult).*

*Technology has advanced greatly in the time of the younger ones, which was not so before, therefore the young ones easily adopt technology (Female youth).*



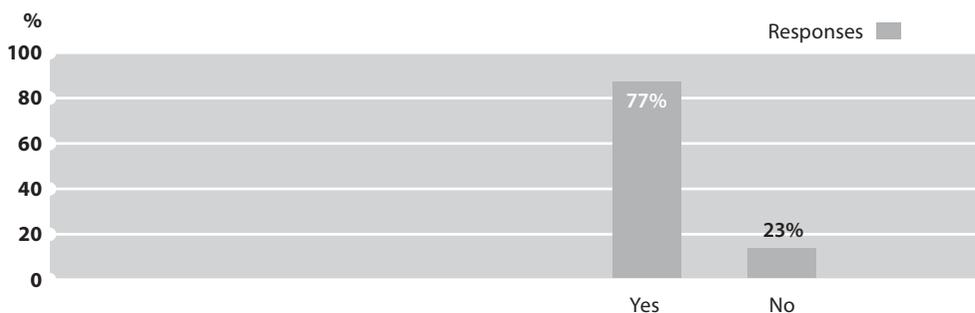
▲ *Figure 4.*  
Life Cycle Explanations of the Generational Gap in Digital Literacy  
Source: Field data, 2018

Overall, in terms of digital literacy or competency among Ghanaians, the observation is that: younger people are more digitally active and digitally skilled (56%); older people are less digitally active and digitally skilled (24%); older people are digitally active and digitally skilled (20%); younger people are less digitally active and digitally skilled (0%); and older people are more digitally active and digitally skilled (0%) (Table 2.). The depiction that younger people are not less digitally active and digitally skilled and that older people are not digitally active and digitally skilled alludes to the fact that there is a generational gap between the two distinct generations in relation to being technologically savvy and digitally literate. Thus, Figure 5. demonstrates that there is a generational gap (77%) between younger and older generations of Ghanaians in terms of digital literacy.

Table 2. Digital Skills among Ghanaians

Ratings of digital skills	Percent (%)
Younger people are more digitally active and digitally skilled	56.0
Younger people are less digitally active and digitally skilled	0.0
Older people are digitally active and digitally skilled	20.0
Older people are more digitally active and digitally skilled	0.0
Older people are less digitally active and digitally skilled	24.0

Source: Field data, 2018



▲ Figure 5.  
Indication of the Existence of Generational Gap between Younger and Older Ghanaians  
Source: Field data, 2018

## FACTORS INFLUENCING DIGITAL LITERACY

In assessing the display of digital skills, the study explored the notion as to whether older people use social media platforms more than younger people and found, on the contrary, with an emphatic no response (83%), that younger people utilize social media platforms more than their older generation counterparts. As mentioned earlier, whereas some studies (e.g., van Dijk, 2005; Zillien and Hargittai, 2009) document that the intensive and extensive nature of Internet use among the well-off and well-educated is indicative of an elite lifestyle, which implies that individuals with less capital are marginalized, this study finds that the extent of digital skills use among young and old people is reflective of a youthful lifestyle, which makes it evident that older people are relatively marginalized.

In furtherance to this, the respondents were asked closed-ended questions on whether they considered age, education, era of birth, technological savvy, social media platform use, family background, socio-economic status (SES), social interaction, socialization, digital skills use (construction, creativity and participation) as digital literacy related. All of

these were mentioned diversely. The next section discusses how age, social interaction, socialization and digital skills use (construction, creativity and participation) influence generational digital literacy.

### Age Differences in Digital Literacy

An individual's age is capable of influencing his/her digital literacy even in the era of birth, due to exposure to and influence of technological innovations. Given this possibility, the study investigated the extent to which age influences digital literacy. Most respondents within the 18-39 category of age (96.8%) intimated that age influenced digital literacy skills. Thus, age influenced digital literacy dynamics ( $p$ -value=0.000), likewise the level of education, era of birth and family background (See Table 3. for details). But technological savvy ( $p$ -value=0.153), social media platform use ( $p$ -value=0.238), and SES ( $p$ -value=0.087) did not influence digital literacy.

Table 3. Chi-square Test: Age differences in digital literacy

Factors considered in digital literacy	18-39	40-59	60+	p-value
Age	96.8%	61.3%	59.4%	0.000
Education	65.4%	58.0%	51.0%	0.005
Employment	90.1%	95.5%	62.3%	0.009
Birth era	97.8%	98.0%	91.9%	0.000
Technological savvy	91.3%	91.9%	45.7%	0.153
Social media platform use	84.8%	52.5%	30.4%	0.238
Family background	100.0%	87.5%	73.1%	0.005
SES	77.0%	88.9%	90.1%	0.087

Source: Field data, 2018; Significance level of 0.05 was used.

## FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE UPTAKE OF DIGITAL LITERACY

### Influence of Socialization in Digital Literacy Uptake

The generational gap in digital literacy can be addressed using social interaction, socialization and a host of others. The socialization viewpoint alludes to the older generation being guided and taught by the younger folks, which is a depiction of adult socialization.

As a result, the study investigated the extent to which socialization influences digital literacy. Age ( $p$ -value=0.000), education ( $p$ -value=0.040), family background ( $p$ -value=0.000) as well as SES, ( $p$ -value=0.049) constitute a depiction of differences in digital literacy; hence their various influences (See Table 4. for details). However, the era of birth ( $p$ -value=0.241) did not influence digital literacy. This means that there is still

intergenerational socialization, particularly the one undertaken by youngsters in aid of the elderly, which is contrary to the traditional norm of older adults socializing their young folks.

Table 4. Chi-square Test: Socialization Differences in Digital Literacy

Factors considered in digital literacy	Low socialization	Average socialization	High socialization	p-value
Age	98.9%	93.9%	98.0%	0.000
Education	91.3%	88.0%	87.8%	0.040
Birth era	96.8%	79.6%	77.6%	0.241
Family background	33.7%	92.0%	79.2%	0.000
SES	79.3%	58.0%	79.2%	0.049

Source: Field data, 2018; Significance level of 0.05 was used.

### Influence of Social Interaction in Digital Literacy Uptake

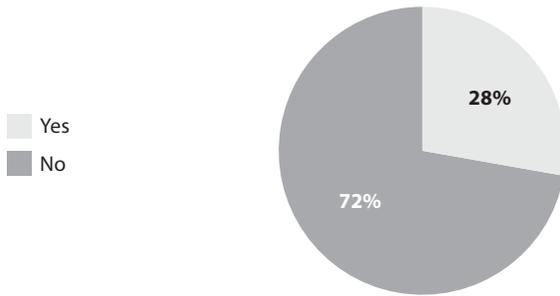
Significantly, the socialization process is aided to a large extent by social interaction, which was deployed frequently by the study respondents. The findings show that age (100%) and family background (100%) scored highly on social interaction ratings. Similarly, age ( $p$ -value=0.000) and family background ( $p$ -value=0.038) influence digital literacy oriented social interaction (Table 5.), whereas education, employment, birth era and SES did not show any difference in this regard.

Table 5. Chi-square Test: Social Interaction Differences in Digital Literacy

Factors considered in digital literacy	Low social interaction	Average social interaction	High social interaction	p-value
Age	76.1%	97.0%	100.0%	0.000
Education	57.0%	98.0%	68.0%	1.000
Employment	80.4%	51.0%	90.0%	0.087
Birth era	61.5%	65.0%	78.8%	0.143
Family background	56.5%	91.9%	100.0%	0.038
Social economic status	84.1%	79.7%	10.9%	0.065

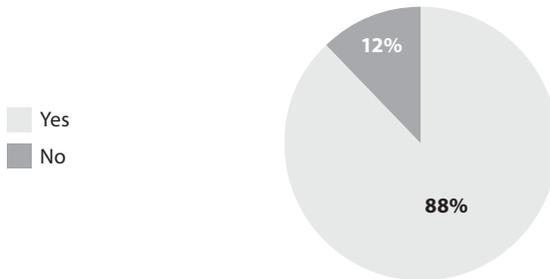
Source: Field data, 2018; Significance level of 0.05 was used.

This notwithstanding, the findings show (72%) that the rate and/or the extent of digital literacy vary/varies among younger and older generations (Figure 6.). In this context, the rate may favor younger people over the older ones.



▲ *Figure 6.*  
Digital Literacy Variation among Young and Old Generations  
Source: Field data, 2018.

Being digitally skilled amounts to digital literacy. This has implications for the use, communication and participation as variables for digital competency (See Belshaw, 2014 for details). However, this situation can be improved for the sake of older adults (88%) in particular, (Figure 7). The no responses speak in favor of the fact that there could be some challenges to the attainment of improvement.



▲ *Figure 7.*  
Improvement in Digital Literacy for Older People  
Source: Field data, 2018.

Interestingly, this can be achieved through a variety of ways, including adult education, digital literacy acquisition through life-long learning (38%), learning by the self (6%), induced learning by a given ICT program as well as intergenerational learning between younger and older people (Table 6.).

Table 6. Ways to Improve Digital Literacy among Older People

Improvement strategies	Percent (%)
Adult education in digital literacy	30.0
Life-long learning	32.0
Learning by the self	6.0
ICT program induced learning	14.0
Intergenerational learning between younger and older people	18.0

Source: Field data, 2018.

Intergenerational learning has implications for digital literacy skills transfers between young and old persons. Consequently, the interview data outlines the following:

*Intergenerational learning relegates to the background digital illiteracy and incompetence (Male older adult).*

*Intergenerational learning has the propensity to remove the difference in digital era label (Female youth).*

*Older people who are grandparents may obtain digital literacy from their grandchildren (Female older adult).*

*As older people interact with the younger ones, they get to improve their digital literacy base by soliciting technological assistance from them (Male youth).*

This means that there is generational socialization, particularly the one undertaken by youngsters directed towards the elderly, which is contrary to the traditional norm of older adults socializing their young folks as previously indicated.

### Acceptance and Diffusion of Technology

The findings show that a variety of variables such as gender, age, education and SES all play significant roles in the acceptance and diffusion of technology and digital literacy. Age (99.8%) plays a key role in this context. In a similar vein, gender plays an important role in the acceptance and diffusion of technology (see Table 7.). This is because, comparatively, more men than women are technologically savvy, perhaps due to adventurousness and extent of exposures. Education (98.0%) plays an essential role in lieu of the acceptance and diffusion of technology, since being educated and/or literate may sometimes have implications for digital literacy. Further, SES plays an essential role in the acceptance and diffusion of technology. This variable includes the location where the individual was raised or oriented. For example, in a wealthy family in a developed country context, the propensity to be digitally literate is higher than in a less developed country context. Similarly, age ( $p$ -value=0.015) and education ( $p$ -value=0.015) enormously influenced the acceptance as well as diffusion of digital literacy compared to gender and SES.

Table 7. Chi-square Test: Acceptance and Diffusion of Technology Differences in Digital Literacy

Factors considered in digital literacy	Low acceptance & diffusion	Average acceptance & diffusion	High acceptance & diffusion	p-value
Age	99.0%	87.0%	99.8%	0.015
Gender	50.2%	65.9%	50.9%	0.857
Education	78.0%	99.1%	98.0%	0.010
SES	30.2%	69.0%	76.1%	0.755

Source: Field data, 2018; Significance level of 0.05 was used.

## APPLICATION OF GENERATIONAL DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS

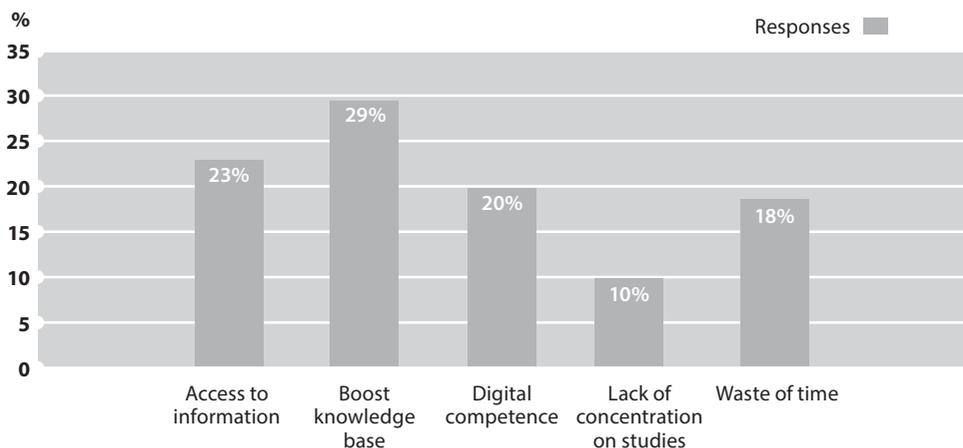
Generational digital literacy skills are normally displayed as proof of the application of the same. Hence, application was ascertained through how digital literacy skills are used or constructed among the age categories 40-59 (90.0%), the associated p-value=0.002; communication – 18-39 year group, p-value=0.000; including participation – 18-39 (98.9%), the corresponding p-value=0.042 (Table 8.). This can be interpreted by Belshaw's (2014) elements of the digital literacy model. The above finding is indicative of the fact that out of the four conceptualizations identified, namely attitudes, access, skills, and types of usage (DiMaggio and Hargittai, 2001; Norris, 2001), this study identifies with digital skills, and forms of usage.

Table 8. Chi-square Test: Generational Differences in Digital Literacy

Factors considered in digital literacy	18-39	40-59	60+	p-value
Construction	99.1%	90.0%	51.5%	0.002
Communication	100.0%	89.6%	49.9%	0.000
Participation	98.9%	92.1%	52.9%	0.042

Source: Field data, 2018; Significance level of 0.05 was used.

Digital literacy has two distinct outcomes, both positive and not so positive. On the one hand, the positive outcomes pertaining to being technologically savvy refer to the ease of the use of technology and applications, which ensures access to information, boosts one's knowledge base (37%), and enhances competence. On the other hand, it comes with some challenges as well, such as the lack of concentration on academic work (18%) among the youth, (Figure 8.). This is because digital literacy and its associated competences lure technologically savvy persons (*e.g.*, the youth, students) into spending so much time on that, particularly on social media platforms, sometimes to the detriment of their educational careers and/or studies, instead of enhancing them. Yet, such competence could be used to assess the requisite information to facilitate academic work.



▲Figure 8.  
Effects of Digital Literacy  
Source: Field data, 2018

The study examined the correlation between digital literacy expositions and digital device usage among older adults. The result is a Pearson  $r$  of 0.514 (51.4%). Hence, for every change of one standard z-score unit in digital expositions, there is 0.514 standard unit of digital device usage orientation required in the same direction. Put differently, in predicting variations across the sample on the dependent variable, errors were reduced by 9.95% (*i.e.*  $r^2$ ) for all respondents. Digital literacy exposition positively correlates with digital device usage among older adults (Table 9).

Table 9. Correlates of Digital Literacy Expositions and Digital Device Usage among Older Adults

	Digital literacy expositions	Digital device usage among older adults
Digital literacy expositions	1	.514** .000 361
Digital device usage among older adults	.514** .000 361	1 361

Source: Field data, 2018; Significance level of 0.05 was used.

Significantly, the utilization of technology has implications for onward usage of health-related gadgets such as alarms, robots (*e.g.*, *Robot Sofia*) among others.

## DISCUSSION

Digital literacy is oftentimes expressed in social media platform usage. Social media are platforms that facilitate social networking, including access to vital information. It is indicative of the domination of social media as a medium of information dissemination and access. Hence, social media are a huge opportunity to reach out to an audience and to increase information dissemination and access. Dovie (2019b) documents that social media platforms such as *Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Google, Pinterest, etc.* offer a social interaction opportunity for people across varied economic or social backgrounds and age categories. Older generations often depend on the younger ones by way of becoming socialized digitally, including the improvement thereof. This is an indication of digital literacy oriented adult socialization, facilitated by social interaction with younger generations. However, this mode of socialization is oriented towards digital skill transfer. Therefore, adult socialization (Dzorgbo, 2008; Dovie, 2017, 2019b) cannot be underestimated in the context of generational digital literacy. Beth Hurst *et al.* (2013) demonstrate that social interaction has a strong propensity of improving and/or enhancing knowledge or literacy (critical thinking) as well as problem solving skills. Neil Selwyn also notes that: "the likelihood of gaining advantage from digital education is clearly related to the resources that social groups command, therefore pointing towards the role of digital technology in the perpetuation of accumulated advantage and the reproduction of inequalities" (Selwyn, 2014: 138).

Dovie (2019b) also finds that comparatively more young people use and obtain diverse types of information from social media sources. With the exception of the *WhatsApp* platform that older adults registered a greater presence for (38.9%), they could not compete with the younger generation in relation to other platforms. This may also be indicative of being technologically savvy, which applies more to younger than to older individuals. Also, this is indicative of intergenerational gap in social media platforms usage. This has repercussions for the generational gap in social media access and utilization. In the same vein, the findings articulate the fact that the generational digital literacy gap among younger and older people can be filled with social interaction and socialization. The case of older people interacting with their younger folks, including their grandchildren, may result in their being socialized intergenerationally with implications for enhancing their digital literacy skills. Other measures that could be turned to for the same gains encompass: adult education in digital literacy, digital literacy acquisition through lifelong learning, self-learning, ICT program induced learning and intergenerational learning between younger and older people.

Social media platforms are vehicles for human interaction. The results reveal that a significant connection exists between the health and healthcare dimension of later life, digital literacy and competence, social interaction and socialization, since they facilitate or lay the foundation for digital literacy and facilitate digital device utilization. Similarly, Brody (2017) writes that social interaction is a critically important contributor to good health and longevity.

The benefits of digital literacy are enormous. They include access to information, boost in one's knowledge base, digital competence and a host of others. Dovie (2019b) documents the belief that with the acquisition of knowledge, generational barriers can be broken. Inasmuch as social interaction is an everyday part of life, in the context of this paper, it facilitates the transfer or sharing of vital information or ideas that cut across a broad range of life's trajectories, including body image enhancement targeted at social acceptance. Encouraging social interaction is one of the most effective ways of learning creative methods to solve complex problems (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995, cited in Hurst *et al.*, 2013). Digital literacy can be employed to facilitate digital storytelling by grandparents to their grandchildren (Mendes, 2019). The issue of digital literacy can also be narrowed to security issues (Mendes, 2019), especially with respect to the use of technological gadgets in enhancing activities for daily living (ADLs) for older adults, *e.g.*, alarms or digital tools in the area of e-threat.

Generational digital literacy has implications for the extension and boosting of the silver market economy. The utilization of the products of the silver economy facilitates access to information as well as social inclusion. For example, new technologies provide opportunities for the delivery of broad, flexible interventions to older people via digital tools and services, both physically and psychologically (Vaportzis *et al.*, 2017),, including financial planning, banking, keeping healthy, independent living, and shopping (even for people who live alone).

Digital knowhow may facilitate social networking among older people through text messaging, and call for help. As a result, in developed countries, the following abound: robots, alarm watches that can provide signals of help seekers to an ambulance, healthcare, police, fire service, *etc.*. The replication of the same in Ghana is presently imperative and attainable through: New Year school at the University of Ghana, organized yearly, lifelong learning protocols, telecommunication companies such as *Vodafone, MTN, Airtel-Tigo, Glo, Kasapa*.

## CONCLUSION

Digital skills use is expressed in a variety of ways, including participation on social media platforms. However, older adults are handicapped on this trajectory for reasons such as being born before computers, unwillingness to learn, and lack of the requisite learning opportunities. This alludes to the fact that younger people are more digitally active and digitally skilled, whereas their older counterparts are less digitally active and digitally skilled. In essence, digital literacy related to the generational gap exists between young and old persons. It is worth mentioning that this gap may be historically shaped. The generational digital literacy gap situation can be improved by means of taking measures such as adult education in digital literacy, lifelong learning, learning by the self, ICT program induced learning as well as intergenerational learning between younger and older people.

The factors that influence digital literacy are diverse: age ( $p$ -value=0.000), education, era of birth and family background influence digital literacy. The results reveal that a myriad of factors, namely gender, age, education and SES facilitate the acceptance and diffusion of technology and digital literacy. Application of generational digital literacy skills was explored by means of the factors of construction ( $p$ -value=0.002), communication ( $p$ -value=0.000) and participation ( $p$ -value=0.042).

There are two dimensional outcomes pertaining to digital literacy, namely positive and not so positive. The positive outcomes pertain to being technologically savvy, with implications for technology use and application ease, access to information, boosting one's knowledge base, and facilitating competence. The problem, however, is the lack of concentration on academic work. The study outlines connections to how to do, how to use, how to communicate, as well as how to participate – even in terms of daily activities, needs and challenges regarding health service providers, care providers and other stakeholders. Particularly, Belshaw (2014) illuminates that a 'digitally literate' individual is someone who has a good balance of the eight elements. However, the scope of this paper accommodates only three (*i.e.*, use, communication and participation) of these eight elements.

Younger generations are by far more digitally literate than the older ones. It is therefore concluded that older generational dependence on the younger ones through the phenomenon of socialization ensures being socialized digitally through digital-literacy-skill-transfer oriented socialization. The benefits of digital literacy use among older people cannot be overemphasized. Further, digital literacy, expositions and exploits are significant in terms of how they shape adaptation to digital device utilization in later life.

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# GENERACIJSKA PERSPEKTIVA DIGITALNE PISMENOSTI U GANI U 21. STOLJEĆU: VEĆ ZAOSTALI?

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**SAŽETAK** Rad istražuje vezu između različitih generacija i digitalne pismenosti. Za potrebe istraživanja jednostavnim slučajnim uzorkovanjem odabran je 361 ispitanik, dok je 10 ispitanika odabrano namjernim uzorkovanjem. Autori su koristili mješovite metode, uključujući i metodu ankete. Podaci su podvrgnuti bivarijantnim, korelacijskim i tematskim analizama. Rezultati pokazuju da su mlađe osobe digitalno aktivnije i digitalno vještije u usporedbi sa starijima, što ukazuje na postojanje digitalnog jaza između dvije distinktivne generacije kada je riječ o tehnološkim sposobnostima. Na to značajno utječe razdoblje kada su ispitanici rođeni, s obzirom na to da se svaka generacija susreće sa specifičnim tehnološkim inovacijama, socijalizacijskim obrascima i obrascima samoorganizirajuće socijalne interakcije. Zaključuje se da su digitalno opismenjavanje i prakticiranje digitalne pismenosti značajni za oblikovanje generacijskih interakcija, uključujući i prilagodbu na korištenje digitalnih uređaja u starijoj dobi.

## KLJUČNE RIJEČI

GENERACIJE, DIGITALNE VJEŠTINE, SOCIJALNE INTERAKCIJE, SOCIJALIZACIJA, ZDRAVLJE, DIGITALNI UREĐAJI

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**PRIKAZI KNJIGA**

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*BOOK REVIEWS*

Manfred Spitzer

**DIGITALNA DEMENCIJA: KAKO MI I NAŠA DJECA SILAZIMO S UMA**

Naklada Ljevak, Zagreb, 2018., 343 str.

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Knjiga uglednog njemačkog neuroznanstvenika i psihijatra Manfreda Spitzera *Digitalna demencija: kako mi i naša djeca silazimo s uma* objavljena je u Njemačkoj 2012., a hrvatski prijevod Borisa Perića doživjela je šest godina poslije. U Njemačkoj je izazvala veliku pozornost javnosti i struke, a bila je i najprodavanija knjiga tjednika „Der Spiegel“. Zanimanje hrvatskih čitatelja očito je također veliko jer u mnogobrojnim gradskim knjižnicama postoje liste rezervacija. Riječ je o knjizi koja nije namijenjena samo znanstvenoj i stručnoj javnosti, već bi je trebao pročitati svaki roditelj i nakon toga razgovarati sa svojom djecom o korištenju digitalnih medija.

Knjiga je podijeljena na četrnaest poglavlja, a nakon uvoda s intrigantnim naslovom *Za- glupljuje li nas Google?*, autor piše o raznim temama: o korištenju taksija i važnosti mozga kod vozača taksija, o školi koja umjesto čitanja i pisanja nudi *copy and paste*, o pohranjivanju informacija u mozgu ili oblaku, o Facebooku koji je zamijenio susrete licem u lice, o DVD-ima za bebe „einsteine“, o laptopima u vrtićima, o povezanosti digitalnih igara i ocjena u školi, o digitalnim urođennicima, o *multitaskingu* koji kod djece i mladih izaziva poremećaje pozornosti, o samokontroli i stresu, o vezi digitalnih medija s nesanicom i depresijom te o tome zašto guramo glavu u pijesak i ništa ne poduzimamo. Na kraju knjige, uz kazalo i izvore slika, autor na 20 stranica daje pregled istraživanja na koja se poziva.

Manfred Spitzer, koji se već desetljećima bavi mozgom, procesima učenja i medijima, kroz cijelu knjigu upozorava roditelje da djeci, čiji je mozak još u razvoju, ograniče vrijeme koje provode ispred ekrana digitalnih medija. Elektronički mediji – pametni telefoni, digitalni asistenti, računala, satelitska navigacija i stalna povezanost s internetom dovode do toga da manje koristimo mozak, čime njegova učinkovitost opada. Takav način života ometa oblikovanje mozga mladih ljudi pa je njihova mentalna učinkovitost od samog početka ispod razine koju bi bez tih suvremenih medija mogli postići. Djeca danas nemaju potrebu pamtit i različite informacije jer se sve može „uguglati“, a „tko prepušta spravi da misli umjesto njega, neće postati stručnjak“, navodi dr. Spitzer (16). Pozivajući se na različita znanstvena istraživanja, autor piše kako korištenje računala u ranoj dječjoj dobi može dovesti do poremećaja pozornosti, a u kasnijoj dječjoj dobi do slabijeg uspjeha u školi. Razvojem društvenih medija došlo je do socijalne izolacije i površnih kontakata, što djecu i mlade čini usamljenima i nesretnima. Mladi koji gotovo nisu imali priliku razviti društveno ponašanje, osim na internetu, imaju veće šanse da im se moždana područja zadužena za društveno ponašanje ne razvijaju normalno (116-122). Posljedice toga danas je teško sagledati, ali se nad njima treba zamisliti.

Južna Koreja trenutno je zemlja s najintenzivnijim korištenjem digitalnih medija u svijetu, a oko 12 % mladih Korejaca pokazuje izražene simptome ovisnosti. Upravo su na digitalnu demenciju prvi upozorili korejski liječnici 2007., jer su zabilježili kod mladih odraslih osoba veliki broj različitih poremećaja pamćenja, pozornosti i koncentracije, emocionalnog i općenitog otupljivanja. Tu kliničku sliku nazvali su digitalna demencija (17-18). Zbog sve manjeg korištenja mozak se smanjuje, stres uništava živčane stanice, a nove stanice koje rastu ne preživljavaju jer za njih više nema potrebe. I tako se stvara digitalna demenci-

ja, odnosno sve veća nesposobnost da se mentalne sposobnosti koriste i kontroliraju u punom opsegu. Nastaje začarani krug gubitka kontrole, duševno i tjelesno propadanje, društveni pad, osamljivanje, stres i depresija, a to sve ograničava kvalitetu života i vodi do prerane smrti (282).

Manfred Spitzer nije protivnik digitalnih medija, jer ih i sam koristi, nego poziva na njihovu optimalnu upotrebu potkrepljujući svoje teze i stavove različitim znanstvenim istraživanjima. Život bez digitalnih tehnologija danas nije moguć. One povećavaju našu produktivnost, olakšavaju nam život i posao, služe nam za zabavu i razonodu. Bez digitalne obrade informacija suvremeni svijet doživio bi slom. Ali dugotrajno korištenje tih tehnologija, posebice od najranije dobi, ima nesagledive posljedice na razvoj mozga. I zato autor upozorava na visok potencijal stvaranja ovisnosti i dugoročnu štetu koju digitalni mediji čine tijelu (stres, depresija, ovisnost, nesanica, pretilost) (245-259). Dr. Spitzer je predstojnik Sveučilišne psihijatrijske klinike u Ulmu i svakodnevno se u svom radu s pacijentima suočava s različitim zdravstvenim poteškoćama koje izaziva pretjerana upotreba digitalnih tehnologija.

Ako su digitalni mediji tako opasni, autor postavlja pitanje zašto nitko ništa ne poduzima. Odgovor je posve jednostavan: na digitalnim proizvodima zarađuje se veliki novac i zato sudbine drugih ljudi i budućnost djece nisu bitni. Intel, Apple, Facebook, Google i druge tvrtke žele zaraditi novac i zato lobiraju. Šire pogrešne informacije, izvrcu činjenice, zamagljuje. I na to nitko ne reagira, ni neovisne komisije, ni predstavnici Crkve, ni političari, ali ni nadležna ministarstva zdravstva, znanosti i obrazovanja... već upućuju hvalospjeve digitalnim medijima, piše dr. Spitzer (25-26).

Koliko je digitalna ovisnost opasna najbolje se vidi po broju od oko 250 tisuća mladih u Njemačkoj između 14 godina i 24 godine koji su ovisnici o internetu, a još 1,4 milijuna mladih Nijemaca su problematični korisnici interneta. Konzumacija alkohola, nikotina, lakših i težih ilegalnih opojnih droga opada, a ovisnost o računalima i internetu drastično raste, ističe autor u predgovoru (7). Kako se protiv toga boriti? Autor u zaključku daje praktične savjete koji uključuju, između ostalog, zdravu prehranu, kretanje, bolje planiranje vremena, pomaganje drugima, ali i izbjegavanje digitalnih medija jer nas čine „debelima, glupima, agresivnima, usamljenima, bolesnima i nesretnima. Ograničite svojoj djeci vrijeme provedeno uz digitalne medije jer jedino to ima dokazano pozitivan učinak. Svaki dan bez digitalnih medija za dijete je dobiveno vrijeme. Mozgovi budućih generacija važni su za blagostanje i održanje kulture. Prestanimo ih sustavno pretvarati u smeće“, poručuje dr. Spitzer (305-309).

Željana Ivanuš

Lee McIntyre

**POST-TRUTH**

MIT Press, 2018, 240 pp.

ISBN 978-0262535045

Lee McIntyre, a research fellow at Boston University, published a book entitled *Post-Truth* in 2018. The book deals with the origins and the current state of the era marked by the absence of 'truth'. Oxford Dictionaries selected 'post-truth' as the word of 2016, and

defined the concept as: "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." In the same year, the term became widely used during the US presidential election campaign and the 'Brexit referendum' in the UK, as a result of the proliferation of misinformation and fake news, especially on social media. The rise of post-truth politics leads to certain ends: lying without consequences, ignoring the truth and manipulating the citizens' political choices. Correspondingly, from the perspective of people, they tend to remain convinced of what they want to believe and ignore information that contradicts their opinions or beliefs. In such an environment, also conceptualized as echo-chambers, existing views of individuals/groups are reinforced and alternative ideas are not considered.

According to McIntyre, the roots of the post-truth era lie deep in postmodernism philosophy. Some of the characteristics of the postmodern age were undermining grand narratives and holistic truths (Enlightenment, Marxism, science, etc.). In that vein, postmodernist scholars challenged the concept of objective truth and claimed that every narrative is relative and subjective. They did not believe that the use of reason is the main way to investigate our world and put the same importance on emotional responses and logical explanations. Thus, following the arguments of McIntyre, right-wing politicians took over the core idea of postmodernism that "there is no way to establish universal truth" (p. 126) and started to deny scientific knowledge. As expressed by Kakutani (2018) in a similar way, right-wing politicians and media professionals, who want to question evolution or deny the reality of climate change started to fabricate alternative facts.

Another main theme of the book is the role of traditional and social media in the context of the propagation of fake news. McIntyre's approach is that the 'balanced reporting' principle of the traditional media outlets, which was defined as giving equal weight to both sides of the argument, created a false equivalence. This journalistic tendency poses the risk of being too generous to partisan and fallacious viewpoints to the detriment of scientific facts, for the sake of editorial balance. For instance, on the subject of climate change, a journalist may cover the scientific evidence and the denial of that evidence in equal measure. At first glance, this could seem like objective and balanced reporting. Actually, there is a risk of giving partisan, fictitious and dangerous views publicity and legitimacy (Champagne, 2017), which could harm the public.

On the other hand, starting in the 1990s, "the process of forsaking fact-based investigative reporting for opinion-based pundit-driven coverage" (p. 91) became widespread. "The rise of social media as a source of news blurred the line even further between news and opinion" (p. 93). People started to share various opinions/stories from social networks (*Twitter, Facebook, etc.*), alternative news platforms and personal blogs, as facts. Although manipulation via media outlets is not new, through rapid dissemination of information, social media enabled an extensive spread of fake news. Moreover, some people's tendency to read and believe news that already fits their point of view, fed the political polarization (p. 94) in countries like the USA. In the end, the political polarization of the public was exploited by the politicians and digital media companies, in order to increase profits and gain political power.

So, what can we do to fight back in the age of post-truth and fake news? According to McIntyre, one of the most important ways to fight back against post-truth is to fight within ourselves (p. 162). In this context, one should never quit to seek the facts/truth and question

their beliefs. Further, to support critical thinking and investigative journalism, and to uncover/disseminate facts relentlessly are other key components of the fight against post-truth. As stated by the author, "The electronic dissemination of information can be used to spread lies, but it can also be used to spread the truth" (p. 122). In my opinion, improving the digital skills of educators and students is equally important. Digital literacy lessons should be taught at schools to meet the objective of creating global digital citizens who can think critically and make rational decisions based on facts.

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Mehmet Fatih Çömlekçi

Mario Hibert

### DIGITALNI ODRAST I POSTDIGITALNA DOBRA: KRITIČKO BIBLIOTEKARSTVO, DISRUPTIVNI MEDIJI I TAKTIČKO OBRAZOVANJE

Multimedijalni institut, Zagreb, 2018., 152 str.  
ISBN 978-953-7372-48-4

Kao što ističe autor Mario Hibert knjiga *Digitalni odrast i postdigitalna dobra* nastala je uslijed potrebe da se naglasi razlika između „tehničkog pacificiranja“ bibliotekarstva te rasprave o političnosti iste discipline. Ubrzani tehnološki razvoj koji prati prodor sveprisutne digitalizacije za svoju posljedicu ima učestalo preuzimanje paradigmi svojstvenih neoliberalnom kapitalizmu. Autor ističe neke od ključnih riječi u domeni informacijskog društva: informacijska i medijska pismenost, društvo znanja, upravljanje informacijama te web 2.0 tehnologije. Djelujući u okruženju svojevrstne prisile na korištenje alata svojstvenih korporativnoj sferi, čini se kako suvremeni bibliotekari, dakako u generalnom smislu, zapostavljaju povijesno uvjetovan plemenit socijalno-kritički moment svojstven toj vrijednoj djelatnosti. Knjiga je podijeljena u šest tematskih poglavlja. Započinje *Uvodom* u kojem Hibert opisuje današnje umreženo društvo nazivajući ga lažnim u pogledu često slavljene dosegnute razine demokratičnosti. Naime, kako kaže autor referirajući se na Vaidhyanathana (2011), zapravo je riječ o predaji ispred poduzetničke kulture Silicijske doline. Pritom upravo bibliotekarstvo, ako se razumije kritičko-pedagoški, može igrati važnu ulogu u dekonstrukciji nekih od suvremenih mitova. Hibert podsjeća na stereotip o bibliotekarima kao o onima koji podržavaju *status quo*; međutim, također podcrtava njihovu ulogu kao zaštitnika u službi javnog dobra – fizičkog prostora, jednako kao i znanja shvaćenog kao javno dobro. Prvo poglavlje, *Ka pedagogiji kritičkog bibliotekarstva*, na početku skreće pažnju na pobjedu pozitivizma i liberalne ekonomske misli. Kako bi bio još precizniji, opisujući informacijsko društvo, autor rabi kovanicu „kibernetički neoliberalizam“. Povezanost čovjeka i stroja te posljedice koje ta povezanost proizvodi imaju značajan utjecaj na formiranje vrijed-

nosti ne samo danas, u doba sveopće interaktivnosti, već kada se govori i o budućnosti. U okolnostima dominacije tzv. metapodataka koji su nerijetko izraz prikrivene društvene opresije i kontrole, kritičko bibliotekarstvo, misli Hibert, ne može se odvojiti od obrazovanja koje za cilj ima jačanje individualne svijesti.

Drugo poglavlje nosi naslov *Disruptivna mašina*. U njemu autor, citirajući teoretičare kao što su Terranova (2000) i Taylor (2014), ukazuje na zanimljivu činjenicu kako današnji korisnici koji obitavaju u digitalnom prostoru dijeleći sadržaj zapravo isporučuju besplatan rad koji eksploatiraju „veliki igrači“ koji imaju resurse i mogućnosti za mikrociljanje porukama potencijalnih potrošača. Dotiče se i aktualnog pitanja post-istine o kojemu govori Morozov (2017), povezujući ga s nezasitnim generiranjem podataka koje obilježava digitalne platforme. Treće je poglavlje *Epistemička kriza i javni prostor*. Javni prostor biblioteka trebao bi predstavljati nespутanu slobodu i egalitarizam. Međutim, on se danas nalazi pred nezahvalnim izborom između usvajanja neoliberalnih obrazaca s jedne te marginaliziranja s druge strane. Navodeći između ostalih razmišljanja razmišljanje Matterna (2014), Hibert biblioteke apostrofira kao polja alternativne stvarnosti s mogućnošću propitivanja posljedica digitalizacije. Nudeći poveznicu s prethodnim poglavljem, autor ovdje otvara i temu informacijskih filtera, tj. mjehura (engl. *filter bubble*) – personaliziranih strojno stvorenih polja. Četvrto poglavlje, *Taktičko bibliotekarstvo: mikropolitika otpora*, donosi razradu mogućnosti za otpor jednosmjernom toku informacija putem forme aktivističkog djelovanja – elektroničkoga građanskog neposluha. Autor na ovom mjestu, pod utjecajem Balázsa Bodóa (2015), uvodi termin „biblioteke iz sjene“ koji se odnosi na kolaborativne projekte dokidanja informacijskog monopola. Takav je monopol vidljiv, primjerice, u području znanosti gdje autorsko-izdavačka sprega može rezultirati elitističkim pristupom koji suspendira širenje novih spoznaja, čime se dodatno produbljuje jaz između privilegiranih i onih koji to nisu. Jednom vrstom buntovničkog piratskog djelovanja može se tako obnoviti misija biblioteka – univerzalnost znanja. Peto poglavlje, naziva *Bottom-app*, otvara temu alternative strogo hijerarhiziranom izdavaštvu kroz suradnički odnos sveučilišta, akademskih radnika i biblioteka. Autor ističe kako probleme digitalne ekologije nije moguće riješiti „jednom istinom“. Po njemu se pravi put nalazi u širenju istraživanja na temelju suradništva, kroz multiperspektivnost. Krucijalna je pritom uloga bibliotekara koji će raditi na dugoročnom usađivanju kompetencija pojedincima nesprenim na prihvaćanje diktata tržišta.

Posljednje, šesto poglavlje nosi naziv *Postdigitalna sjena*. Autor ističe nužnost obnove kritičke teorije te taktičko djelovanje u umjetničkoj, izdavačkoj i znanstvenoj praksi. Unatoč „strukovnoj okoštalosti“ bibliotekarstvo kao izraz volje za očuvanjem i širenjem znanja od velike je važnosti i tako ga treba tretirati.

Knjiga *Digitalni odrast i postdigitalna dobra* na zanimljiv način obrađuje neka od suvremenih pitanja medijske teorije i prakse. To čini polazeći iz perspektive pomalo zapostavljene discipline bibliotekarstva, dajući istovremeno pritom i svoj obol ponovnoj aktualizaciji te discipline. Kao stručno štivo knjiga Marija Hiberta svakako bi trebala biti interesantna studentima i teoretičarima informacijskih i komunikacijskih znanosti, novinarstva te odnosa s javnošću. U pitanjima koje obrađuje pronaći će se i svi drugi aktivni i zainteresirani korisnici medijskih sadržaja koji njeguju kritičku svijest.

Gordana Lesinger

### **ODNOSI S MEDIJIMA I MEDIJSKE AGENDE**

Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Osijek, 2018., 324 str.  
ISBN 978-953-314-123-7

Knjiga *Odnosi s medijima i medijske agende* podijeljena je u devet poglavlja, a u središtu je njezina interesa proučavanje odnosa s medijima kao srži odnosa s javnostima. Teorijski okvir nadopunjen je deskriptivnim studijama slučaja popularnih televizijskih serija „Borgen“ i „Kuća od karata“ (usp. 13). Ističe se uloga strateškog planiranja u odnosima s javnostima te se propituje uloga informacije u digitalnom dobu, a autorica se usmjerila i na proučavanje uloge netradicionalnih medija u stvaranju odnosa s medijima.

U prvom poglavlju *Uvodno poglavlje, okvir i definiranje pojmova* autorica nas podsjeća na proizvodni proces nastanka vijesti te na razne oblike utjecaja na taj proces (izvori, novi mediji, djelatnici sektora odnosa s javnostima). Uspostava odnosa s medijima traži i poznavanje specifičnosti medijskog djelovanja, upozorava autorica, dovodeći u korelaciju odnose s medijima i dnevne medijske agende. „Što su mediji politički neovisniji, to postaju ovisniji o tržišnim čimbenicima“ (31). U sklopu istraživanja utjecaja odnosa s medijima na medijske agende autorica potvrđuje kako je većina njih usmjerena na propitivanje odnosa novinara i stručnjaka za odnose s javnostima (usp. 34-36). Budući da su mediji kao instrument moći često teme filmova i serija te tako dobivaju negativnu konotaciju, Lesinger isprepletenu politike, odnosa s javnostima i medija analizira na temelju kontekstualne analize i komparacije likova iz serije sa stvarnim političkim актерima (Kevin Spacey i Zoran Milanović, Brigitte Nyborg i Jadranka Kosor) (usp. 40-43).

Izveštavanje o političkim temama zaokuplja veliki dio medijskog prostora, što uključuje i medijsko uvjeravanje, kao i posredovanje stvarnosti. Kako nastaju vijesti? Je li medijska istina zapravo laž? Zašto svjedočimo sveprisutnoj trivijalizaciji medijskog sadržaja? To su samo neka od pitanja na koja odgovara drugo poglavlje *Uvjeravajuća komunikacija odnosa s medijima – utjecaj na javnost kroz medijski posredovanu stvarnost*. Kreiranje spektakla i rekonstrukcija stvarnosti prisutni su posebice u političkoj komunikaciji, a Lesinger upozorava kako je način doživljavanja političke stvarnosti uvjetovan medijskim prikazima politike i političara koji mogu biti opterećeni pristranošću (usp. 59-61). Medijalizacija političke komunikacije posljedica je proizvodnog procesa nastanka vijesti, kao i uloge odnosa s javnostima. Mogu li mediji objektivno izvještavati, pita se autorica, s obzirom na to da okretanje lakim temama doprinosi spektakularizaciji politike. U prilog tome ide i kontinuirana proizvodnja napetosti i izvanrednog stanja, što generira *reality* formate (usp. 68). Tržišna usmjerenost potiče jačanje uloge praktičara odnosa s javnostima. Analiza medijalizacije politike na primjeru serija „Borgen“ i „Kuća od karata“ pokazuje primjer makijavelističkog tipa politike, ideološku obojenost hrvatskih medija te analizira političku kampanju na društvenim mrežama.

Treće poglavlje *Moć komunikacije – odnos politike, odnosa s medijima i medija* nastoji odgovoriti na pitanje kako istaknuti poruku u zagušenoj okolini te kako odabrati odgovarajuću komunikacijsku strategiju. Naglašavajući pitanje moći iz dviju prizmi – moći medija i moći nad medijima – autorica ističe kako upravljanje odnosa s medijima mora biti profesionalizirano zbog točnog prenošenja značenja, posebice na društvenim mrežama (usp. 99). Transformacija medija pod pritiskom novih tehnologija odražava se i na promjenu percepcije novinarske profesije, ponajviše u negativnom kontekstu, ali i odnosa s javno-

stima, upozorava Lesinger (usp. 121). Uloga *gatekeepera* promijenjena je i više nije tako ekskluzivna, a korisnici preuzimaju moć u medijima zahvaljujući društvenim mrežama (usp. 126).

Upravljanje medijima postaje sve zahtjevnije i traži temeljito analiziranje tržišnog okruženja, što rezultira nestajanjem granica između ozbiljnog novinarstva i naručenih priča, ističe se u četvrtom poglavlju *Položaj medija u kontekstu političkih odnosa s medijima – upravljanje medijima i upravljanje informacijama*. Slaba razina medijske profesionalnosti odražava se u kontinuiranoj igri između političara i praktičara odnosa s javnostima koji upravljaju informacijama, a time i vijestima. Razumijevanje vrijednosti vijesti i medijske logike tako postaje važno za političare. Kako izgleda trgovanje informacijama između medija i političara, kako političari, ali i stručnjaci za odnose s javnostima nadziru rad novinara u njihovu radu, treba li raditi kompromise s medijima, kako se plasiraju glasine – pitanja su na koja autorica odgovara u istraživačkom dijelu na temelju studija slučaja scena iz popularnih televizijskih serija „Borgen“ i „Kuća od karata“, koje isprepleće s aktualnostima hrvatske političke scene (sukobi u Vladi i ostavke tadašnjih ministara).

U petom poglavlju *Odnosi s medijima – određivanje pojma i uloge u kontekstu odnosa s javnostima i političke komunikacije* autorica definira odnose s medijima te ističe kako izvještavanje u odnosima s medijima traži odabir odgovarajućih kanala i taktika, balans između ravnoteže i forme. Praktičari za odnose s medijima pod pritiskom su jer moraju proizvoditi sadržaj, a kontinuirana napetost u odnosu s novinarima rezultira bitkom za pozornost publike. Nadalje, progovara se o ulozi glasnogovornika, *spinovima*, kao i ulozi odnosa s medijima u stvaranju medijskog dojma, a navedeno se analizira na temelju scena iz popularnih serija.

Kako informacije o događajima postaju temom dana, kako društvene mreže utječu na strukturu medijskih objava, kako redistribucija moći medija i fragmentirano tržište utječu na potražnju, u kakvom su odnosu *agenda setting*, *framing* i *priming* – pitanja su na koja odgovore nudi šesto poglavlje *Teorija postavljanja dnevnog reda – utjecaj odnosa s medijima na postavljanje dnevnih medijskih agendi*. Za djelotvorno nametanje agende ključno je kontinuirano ponavljanje poruke, odabir medija te jasno komuniciranje ciljeva, zaključuje autorica (usp. 253).

Konvergencija medija rezultirala je implementacijom hibridnih medijskih modela, metoda i žanrova, što traži promišljeno upravljanje informacijama, navodi se u sedmom poglavlju *Mediji i komunikacija u kontekstu hibridnoga medijskog sustava*. Medijska industrija prilagođava se novim potrebama i željama publike i tržišta, a osim zahtjeva za kreativnošću, traži se i organizacijska prilagodba. Hibridno okruženje dovodi do preispitivanja moći medijskih menadžera i učinaka njihovih odluka na proizvodni proces. Lesinger upozorava kako su suvremeni odnosi s javnostima postali hibrid novinarstva i marketinga, dok su politički odnosi s javnostima ugroženi neiskusnim praktičarima. Analize slučajeva obrađuju komunikacije praktičara odnosa s javnostima, političara i medija na društvenim mrežama. U osmom poglavlju pod nazivom *Zaključak* autorica navodi važnost strateške komunikacije u ostvarivanju ciljeva i utjecaja kod publike. Hijerarhija *odnosi s javnostima – vlasnici – urednici – mediji* čini okosnicu za postavljanje agende u kojoj sudjeluju novinari i djelatnici odnosa s javnostima. Deveto poglavlje donosi iscrpan popis korištene literature.

Knjiga Gordane Lesinger napisana je jednostavnim i svima razumljivim jezikom, iako obrađuje zahtjevnu i stručnu tematiku, složeno područje novinarstva, odnosa s javnostima,

medija i politike. Nesumnjivo će koristiti studentima komunikologije, novinarstva i odnosa s javnostima, praktičarima te javnosti zainteresiranoj za političku komunikaciju i zakulisne procese koji je prate. Ilustrirana je bogatim primjerima ekranizacije omiljenih televizijskih serija koje obrađuju navedene fenomene, a posebno su zanimljive autoričine usporedbe s aktualnim događajima na hrvatskoj političkoj sceni.

Tanja Grmuša

Ivan Tomić, Zoran Tomić, Davor Pavić, Tomislav Madžar, Damir Primorac

### **STRATEŠKO UPRAVLJANJE SPORTSKOM KOMUNIKACIJOM**

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ISBN 9789958010743 (Synopsis, Sarajevo)

Sport je oduvijek privlačio ljude širom svijeta zbog pomicanja granica pojedinca, preispitivanja vlastitih sposobnosti, njegovanja timskog duha, kao i povezivanja ljudi diljem svijeta. Današnji sportaši prave su zvijezde, a veliki medijski interes prisiljava sportaše i sportske organizacije na aktivnije promišljanje o javnim nastupima i imidžu. Zbog toga se područje djelovanja odnosa s javnostima širi i na sport, a ovaj je priručnik skupine autora nesumnjivo veliki doprinos razvoju odnosa s javnostima u sportu, s obzirom na to da može doprinijeti izobrazbi trenera, ističe se u *Predgovoru* koji potpisuje mr. sc. Vatroslav Mihačić, voditelj Nogometne akademije HNS-a (usp. 7-8). Knjiga je podijeljena na 14 cjelina i 49 poglavlja. U *Uvodu* se obrazlaže potreba za nastankom knjige, kao i stavljanje naglasaka na odnos novinara i sportaša, posebice u pogledu preveniranja posljedica kriza.

Pravovremena reakcija na iznenadne događaje te razumijevanje funkcija komunikacije ključni su za uspješno svladavanje komunikacijskih izazova, o čemu se više govori u prvoj cjelini pod nazivom *Komunikacija*. Razmatrajući u drugoj cjelini *Sportski odnosi s javnošću* definicije odnosa s javnostima, autori sportske odnose s javnostima vide kao funkciju menadžmenta koja nastoji uspostaviti odnose između sportske organizacije i ciljanih javnosti (usp. 23), koje mogu biti brojne. Sportski odnosi s javnostima doprinose izgradnji odnosa sa zajednicom kroz brojne humanitarne akcije kojima se želi pokazati solidarnost i briga za potrebite u društvu (usp. 26). Stoga je važno prepoznavanje interne i eksterne javnosti, kao i specifičnosti djelovanja u otvorenim i zatvorenim sustavima. Poglavlje razmatra i odnose sportskih organizacija sa zaposlenicima, investitorima, vladom i regulatornim tijelima. Treća cjelina *Novinarstvo* donosi pregled temeljnih funkcija novinarstva, profesionalnih standarda izvještavanja, odgovorno postupanje s informacijama i izvorima, kao i specifičnosti sportskih događaja koji utječu na način izvještavanja o njima.

Odnosi s medijima u sportu čine važan dio sportske komunikacije, a autori u četvrtoj cjelini *Odnosi s medijima* podsjećaju kako sportske organizacije uglavnom traže pozitivnu sliku, a često premalo aktivno doprinose tome (usp. 41). Nadalje, čitatelje se upoznaje s važnošću kontrole nad medijima te aktivnostima sportskih organizacija i njihovih odnosa s medijima. Komuniciranje s javnošću novinara i sportskih organizacija zahtijeva brojne vještine usmene i pisane komunikacije koje demonstriraju interpersonalnu komunikacijsku kompetenciju. No, osim tradicionalnih medija, komunikacija se odvija i putem digitalnih kanala, o čemu svjedoče studije slučaja Neymarova ulaganja u YouTube kanal te lansiranje

aplikacije OTRO koja je omogućila izravnu komunikaciju s fanovima (usp. 52), navodi se u petoj cjelini *Tehnike odnosa s javnošću*. Nadalje, u šestoj cjelini *Glasnogovorništvo* ističe se kako se glasnogovorništvo ne može svesti samo na nastup pred kamerama, čime autori pokušavaju razjasniti terminološku zbrku u tome području. Ističu se nužne kompetencije glasnogovornika (informacijska, komunikacijska, etička) te znanje i vještine u kontekstu javnih nastupa, ali i potreba za izgradnjom autoriteta. S druge strane, najvažnija je osobina glasnogovornika vjerodostojnost te lojalnost osobi/organizaciji koju zastupa. Djelotvoran glasnogovornik mora imati uravnotežen odnos sa svima te spremno odgovoriti na sve komunikacijske izazove.

Interes za sportašima raste proporcionalno njihovoj popularnosti i ekspaniranosti, stoga im je u kvalitetnom komuniciranju s javnostima potrebna pomoć stručnjaka za odnose s javnostima, što neki uspješno prakticiraju na društvenim mrežama (David Beckham, Anna Kournikova) kako bi izgradili ili održavali pozitivan imidž, ističe se u sedmoj cjelini *Odnosi s javnošću za trenere i igrače*. Njihov odnos prema medijima mora biti uravnotežen i temeljen na uzajamnom poštovanju, s obzirom na to da je medijski prikaz događaja ovisan o kutu iz kojega se promatra, dok *silenzio stampa* može štetiti reputaciji (usp. 76-79). Osim internih faktora uzročnika krize ne treba zanemariti ni eksterne faktore, poput rastućeg nasilja na sportskim terenima, o čemu se više govori u osmoj cjelini *Sportsko pravo*. Autori podsjećaju na postojeći regulatorni okvir i analiziraju ulogu sportskih inspektora. Deveta cjelina *Psihologija sporta* analizira motivaciju sportaša, ali i ulogu publike u kontekstu pomoći, kao i stvaranja nepotrebnog pritiska. Deseta cjelina *Sponzorstvo* prikazuje modele sponzorstva i marketinške komunikacije, ali i razmatra pitanja njezine etičnosti. Sportska industrija i sportske organizacije nisu imune na krizu, stoga je važno imati kvalitetno razrađen komunikacijski plan i smjernice za koordinirano djelovanje, ističe se u jedanaestoj cjelini *Krizno komuniciranje*. Poglavlje završava s dvadeset preporuka praktičara kojima je cilj dati odgovore na pitanja kako se nositi s teškim pitanjima, kako tretirati špekulacije te kako se ponašati u emocionalno nabijenim situacijama (usp. 107-109).

Dvanaesta cjelina *Volonteri* analizira ulogu odnosa s javnostima u privlačenju volontera i izgradnji publiciteta. Nadalje, trinaesta cjelina *Dodatak*, koju potpisuju Ivan i Zoran Tomić, donosi sažetak najvažnijih komunikacijskih pojmova i savjeta koji potiču na preispitivanje vlastitih komunikacijskih vještina, kao i na kontinuirano educiranje o tehnikama odnosa s javnostima te kvalitetnijeg upravljanja osobnim imidžom i reputacijom. Donoseći citate i studije slučaja brojnih uspješnih govornika, političara i javnih osoba, autori nam otkrivaju tajne uspjeha i savjete kako prevladati teškoće te daju recept za postizanje povjerenja kod publike, ali i uspješno ostvarivanje dominacije u razgovoru. Posljednja, četrnaesta cjelina *Literatura* sadrži popis izvora korištenih pri izradi ovoga djela.

Knjiga *Strateško upravljanje sportskom komunikacijom* predstavlja značajan doprinos popunjavanju praznine u literaturi novog područja odnosa s javnostima u sportu. Ona je primjer bogatog teorijskog znanja autora o komunikaciji i odnosima s javnostima, a popraćena je brojnim studijama slučaja suvremenih sportaša i klubova. Knjiga će sigurno postati koristan udžbenik za kolegije posvećene sportskom marketingu, komunikaciji i odnosima s javnostima, a osim studenata novinarstva i komunikologije, nesumnjivo će koristiti igračima i trenerima za bolje razumijevanje medijskog djelovanja, lakšu komunikaciju s medijima te uspostavu odnosa koji se temelje na međusobnom uvažavanju i povjerenju.

Betteke van Ruler and Frank Körver

**THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY HANDBOOK: TOOLKIT FOR CREATING A WINNING STRATEGY**

Peter Lang, 2019, XII+174 pp.

ISBN: 978-1-4331-5483-6 (HB), ISBN: 978-1-4331-5657-1 (PB), 978-1-4331-5658-8 (PDF),

ISBN: 978-1-4331-5659-5 (ePUB)

This relatively slim volume aims to help communications professionals conduct impactful and agile corporate strategic communications activities. It is targeted primarily at practitioners, guiding them throughout the iterative process of a Communication Strategy Framework, but it has anchor points within the academic literature too, transforming the book into more than just a “how-to”-type of title.

It is a translation of a 2014-released Dutch book called *Het strategisch communicatie frame: Praktische methode voor strategie-ontwikkeling*, with some apparent additions and refreshed sources. At its heart there is the core intention to have the reader ask the right questions at the right time, thinking about how communications can contribute to achieving an organization's or client's priorities. The framework is not just restricted to communications-related activities in principle – it may also be useful as a methodology within one's project management and other corporate activities. The authors state that the take-up for the framework has been immense, with virtually all communications professionals in the Netherlands using it within their professional operations.

The book takes the reader through the framework's process in many easy-to-read stages, despite the wealth of information being provided at the same time. Each chapter is relatively short but navigable, benefitting from a clean design layout, being prefaced with a simple, yet informative long quotation from a leading industry academic or personality. Things are different with the Communication Strategy Framework. It eschews the traditional step-by-step, pre-determined communications strategy behemoth document in favour of an agile method that requires the user to continually adapt to changing circumstances whilst retaining control of the process. It is an alternative way of doing things, involving explicitly considering external and internal contexts based on a specific communication vision and gauging their relative importance, by intensifying collaboration with key players (both internal and external), and making choices that may be considered more drastic than usual. An organization's objectives are taken as a starting point without letting them define the process, and by taking an iterative approach and continually reflecting on whether one's choices remain relevant. All of this whilst asking the key question of 'How can communication genuinely make a difference'. The authors explain the framework by using a comparison to a sailing trip: “[b]efore you set out, you plot a course. En route, you have to make constant adjustments—due to the changing wind, countercurrents, because you are taking the waves at the wrong angle and that's uncomfortable, or because you are on a collision course and likely will have to give way. There are even times that you have to change your destination mid-trip because you realize that it is no longer viable or where you need to go” (p. 17).

Instead of a large traditional communications plan that can be dozens or hundreds of pages long, the framework itself is said to be best suited to a pile of sticky notes and a big sheet of paper stuck on the wall, enabling one to see at-a-glance whether made choices are congruent with each other. Such an approach also allows the practitioner to clearly

state what their strategy is, since the book claims that if you cannot explain your strategy in a page or less (or within minutes) you do not have a critical strategy in any case. A strategy cannot be made within the bubble of a communications department since it needs to involve both internal and external stakeholders, and with the framework's approach one's entire approach to strategy, its development and role are changed as a result. The authors use the term strategy to indicate that "we have discovered a smart way to do things, or that we are thinking in terms of ends rather than means when we are tying in with the organization's strategic roadmap, or that we are thinking about long-term payoffs instead of quick wins", before admitting that these are all very different definitions, which can be rather confusing (p. 14).

The framework is divided into two halves: left and right. The left half helps you choose your orientation, the right half is focused on implementation, with overall eight different building blocks (vision, internal situation, external situation, ambition, accountability, stakeholders, resources, and game plan) attracting their own chapters. When implementing the framework, it may be likely that the practitioners follow it linearly, but they are counselled to expect to go back to earlier blocks to verify whether the choices made remain relevant or require change. Any change is not necessarily a bad thing either. Within each building block's detailed chapters there are 'kickstarters' – useful questions to help get the process going – as well as a wealth of concise, pertinent information to explain the intricacies before ending with a series of dos and don'ts. A fictional case study is provided to show the reader exactly how the framework can be implemented and, true to its promise, it is presented on a double-page spread in the book. The book is rounded off by a reference-type section giving inspirational advice, debunking myths and views and elements of communication such as leadership in communications and offering ten rules to (further aid) implementation of the framework.

Do not be misled by the book giving an impression that implementing the framework is child's play. It does require a lot of focus and shift in traditional, established thinking. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge contained in this relatively slim volume. It is written for the practitioner to implement, but the academic researcher may also find this a rich seam to examine within the strategy and communications-related themes. It can be deserving of consideration on many levels.

**Darren Ingram**

**INFORMACIJE**

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*INFORMATION*



### Upute suradnicima

Interdisciplinarni časopis *Medijske studije* otvara prostor za međunarodnu znanstvenu i stručnu raspravu o medijima, komunikacijama, novinarstvu te odnosima s javnošću unutar kulturnog, povijesnog, političkog i/ili ekonomskog konteksta. Na suradnju su pozvani autori čiji radovi (prilozi) ispunjavaju kriterij relevantnosti i znanstvene izvrsnosti. Radovi ne smiju biti djelomično ili u cijelosti već objavljeni, ne smiju biti u procesu objavljivanja u nekom drugom časopisu, zborniku, knjizi i sl., niti smiju biti prijevod takvih radova. Za sve navedeno autori preuzimaju odgovornost. Uvjet za objavu rada u časopisu jesu dvije anonimne, pozitivne recenzije međunarodnih medijskih stručnjaka.

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McQuail, Denis (2003) Public Service Broadcasting: Both Free and Accountable. *The Public/Javnost* 10 (3): 13-28.

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Ciboci, Lana; Jakopović, Hrvoje; Opačak, Suzana; Raguž, Anja i Skelin, Petra (2011) Djeca u dnevnim novinama: analiza izvještavanja o djeci u 2010., str. 103-166, u: Ciboci, Lana; Kanižaj, Igor i Labaš, Danijel (ur.) *Djeca medija: od marginalizacije do senzacije*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska.

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Ofcom (2013) *Radio: The Listener's Perspective: A Research Report for Ofcom*. <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/radio-research/research-findings13/listeners-perspective.pdf> (20.11.2013.).

UNICEF, Ured za Hrvatsku (2011) *Mišljenja i stavovi djece i mladih u Hrvatskoj*. <http://www.unicef.hr/upload/file/351/175805/FILENAME/StavovidjeceimladihuHrvatskoj.pdf> (19.11.2013.).

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Tongue, Carole (2002) Public Service Broadcasting: A Study of 8 OECD Countries, pp. 107-142 in Collins, Philip (ed.) *Culture or Anarchy? The Future of Public Service Broadcasting*. London: Social Market Foundation.

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Ridgeout, Victoria; Foehr, Ulla and Roberts, Donald (2010) *Generation M<sup>2</sup>: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18- Years Olds*. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. <http://kff.org/other/poll-finding/report-generation-m2-media-in-the-lives/> (28/10/2013).

UNICEF, Croatia Office (2011) *Mišljenja i stavovi djece i mladih u Hrvatskoj (Opinions and Attitudes of Children and Youth in Croatia)*. <http://www.unicef.hr/upload/file/351/175805/FILENAME/StavovidjeceimladihuHrvatskoj.pdf> (19/11/2013).

Ofcom (2013) *Radio: The Listener's Perspective: A Research Report for Ofcom*. <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/radio-research/research-findings13/listeners-perspective.pdf> (20/11/2013).

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