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The role of strategic communication in gender equality activism and collective action: illustrating the need for SDG18

Authors

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Abstract

The existence of social capital (which values the collective over individualism) is fundamental for the development of modern societies (Bourdieu 1986, Coleman 1988, Putman 1993). The social capital of the third sector is associated with “values of civic spirit, ethical consensus, associativism whose social interaction results in a climate of trust and the ability to work together towards a common goal” (Sá and Pequito 2015, p. 14).

Contemporary social movements have spread by contagion in a world virtually connected and characterized by the fast and viral dissemination of images and ideas. According to USC Annenberg’s 2020 Global Communication Report, a new generation of activists, motivated by the lack of trust in political institutions, will become increasingly influential in the coming years.

Because strategic communication is the intentional use of communication by organizations to promote their mission, the contribution of this field of research and practice to the mobilization and participation of citizens is essential (Frandsen and Johansen 2017, Hallahan et al. 2007, Holtzhausen and Zerfass 2014). However, several areas of strategic communication, namely public relations—an area of increasing global economic relevance (Guttmann 2022) — have long not recognized activism-related activities as an integral part of discipline and practice (Dozier and Lauzen 2000, Dutta 2009).

The study approaches the relevance of SDG18 (Communication for all) in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Development (Lee and Vargas 2020, Yusha’u and Servaes 2021). In addition to other reasons related to access to fair media representation, communication platforms, media literacy education, participation in decision-making processes, and free and independent media systems, including SDG18 in the 2030 Agenda would also provide greater attention and reflection by activist organizations and civil society interest groups on the importance of adequate communication strategies to achieve their goals.

The ability of public relations to influence human behavior through communication is recognized (Servaes 2012, Verčič 2008), which is why strategic communication and public relations have a role to play in the communication strategies of activists defending human rights and sustainable development. This role would be better understood and debated if SDG18 (Communication for all) were included in the 2030 Agenda itself.

An ethnographic study was carried out during six months (between January and June 2021) to UMAR, a feminist nongovernmental organization (NGO) based in Portugal and founded in 1976. Additionally, twelve interviews were carried out with specialists in communication and public

relations (CEO's and Directors of communication agencies) to better understand how the same communication strategies that have successfully established mass consumption as a way of life can be used by contemporary activists to increase shared global views such as the 2030 Agenda. This research illustrates the areas where public relations and activism intersect by showing how these intersections could be better understood and debated if SDG18 (Communication for all) were included in the 2030 Agenda.

Key Words

Strategic Communication, Public Relations, Activism, Collective Action

Communicative Ecologies of Displaced Youth. ‘Connecting’, ‘receiving’ and ‘sharing’ in refugee camps

Authors

Dr. Valentina Baú - Western Sydney University

Abstract

This presentation addresses the communicative ecologies of young people in protracted situations of encampment. Findings from research conducted in Kakuma camp, Kenya (established in 1992), and Zaatari camp, Jordan (established in 2012), are introduced in an attempt to build a picture of the ‘whole structure of communication and information in [young] people’s way of life’ (Tacchi, 2003:15). Within this framework, all types of media used are considered as part of a complex media environment that reflects the surrounding social reality, and are analysed both at the individual and community level.

In protracted situations of displacement, refugee camps too often become cities that only exist timelessly in a parallel dimension from their surroundings. Their context is considered as that of a humanitarian emergency; yet, those who have found shelter in the camps and are forced to stay have laid roots for a chapter of their lives in those settings. From an aid assistance perspective, services provided and activities organised in the camps represent a mix between humanitarian and development work. The adaptation of agencies’ work to these contexts has seen the establishment of new communication systems that alternate between community mobilisation and development communication approaches.

Understanding existing communication platforms and networks adopted by the youth in camp settings is crucial for humanitarian agencies operating in contexts of protracted displacement. Such understanding can facilitate the design of more effective and targeted communication interventions that address not only humanitarian needs, but also community development processes with particular focus on young people. This presentation sheds light on ways of ‘connecting’, ‘receiving’ and ‘sharing’ adopted by young refugees in camps, and on the opportunities for agencies to engage more purposefully in peace promotion and in strengthening social cohesion between different groups through communication.

Key Words

Conflict, displacement, youth, participatory communication, CwC, refugees, refugee camps, peacebuilding

Communicative peacebuilding in Kenya: the inclusion of women and youth into local dispute resolution mechanisms

Authors

Dr. Stef Pukallus - University of Sheffield

Abstract

This presentation focuses on a project undertaken as a genuine collaborative effort between the University of Sheffield and Kenyan organisations Oasis Peace Web Organisation (attached to Kenyatta University), Agents for Peace (focusing on the prevention of violent extremism) and LOAH (Light on a Hill, a youth peacebuilding organisation), working together with local communities. More specifically, the project focused on pastoral communities in Kenya; these are riven by conflict and violence and largely exclude women and youth from local conflict resolution mechanisms. By bringing together representatives from these pastoral communities, women and youth organisations, local governments and the authorities, the collaborative team was able to devise recommendations for an action plan that uses communicative peacebuilding as a major component of dispute resolution. The plan promotes four key actions:

1. Raising awareness of the need to involve youth and women in dispute resolution and peacebuilding through local radios, local barazas and forums;
2. Capacity-building for women, youth and the council of elders on dispute resolution;
3. The development of a programme that helps the youth gain vocational skills such as masonry, electricity, tailoring, building and construction as an alternative source of livelihood, in partnership with county government;
4. The creation of a community resource centre to empower the community on peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

The presentation will share experiences, challenges and results of the project, and discuss the importance of co-produced knowledge and initiatives. It will also highlight the significance of making project results, action plan and recommendations accessible to all in relevant local media formats. Lastly, it will offer reflections on the role of peacebuilding initiatives that transform exclusionary mechanisms into inclusive ones in order to promote sustainable social change.

Key Words

Kenya, peacebuilding, community empowerment, participation, violence dispute resolution, women, youth

Migrants as Citizen Journalists: understanding displacement for stronger communities

Authors

Mr. Lorenzo Vargas - World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)

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Abstract

This presentation shares best practices and lessons learnt from a four year project (2019-2022) on migration and communication rights in Colombia and Venezuela. This project has led to the establishment of a network of 25 citizen reporters linked to community radio stations from both sides of the Colombia-Venezuela border and in Bogotá, with an estimated reach of five million people in both countries. The network collectively produced hundreds of media products focused on the needs of both migrants and host communities, becoming a key source of information for the 2 million Venezuelan migrants residing in Colombia, particularly among those with limited access to digital platforms. The network eventually entered into several partnerships with UNHCR, GIZ, local civil society and academia, which ultimately enhanced its reach. In particular, this presentation will share insights into the methodological framework of the project and explore how communication rights play out on the ground in migrant communities.

Venezuelan migrants in Colombia experience different types of vulnerability related to income, age, gender and access to services. The pandemic exacerbated many of these issues, not only because of economic and health reasons but also due to growing xenophobia. Negative perceptions of Venezuelan migration among the general public in Colombia reached 82% in April 2020, a trend that had started in late 2019 during mass demonstrations across the country, where several attacks on migrants were witnessed.

This initiative sought to meet migrants' communication and information needs such as access to information, access to media technology and connectivity, fair media representation, ability to exercise the right to free expression and agency to form new communities. When these needs are unmet, migrants' ability to exercise their broader human rights is undermined. The project sought to enhance the capacity of migrant groups in Colombia to engage in advocacy, build relationships with media houses, and produce a body of evidence to help raise public awareness about the issues they face.

This work was relevant because, as migration and displacement have increased, so has their media coverage, not all of which positively. Some coverage has led to increased hostility towards migrants as well as misinformation and disinformation. The ability of migrants and refugees to make themselves heard in their host societies and to contribute to public discourse on migration is severely curtailed by linguistic, cultural, economic, and political factors. This also raises issues of conflict and creates disharmony in the host communities. In this sense, the efforts of the network to create a rights-based and people-centred narrative of migration has come at a crucial time.

Key Words

Colombia, Venezuela, migration, communication rights, information needs, access to information

Re-signifying Territories Affected by War and Natural Events: Decolonial participatory research in Tolima (Colombia) and Panabaj Canton (Guatemala)

Authors

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Abstract

Territory can be defined not only as a geographic space, but also, from an ontological perspective, as a community space that creates bonds among its inhabitants and between community's present, past and future. Therefore, it is highly connected to people's identities. It is recognised that in post-conflict peacebuilding processes, actors seek to re-signify different spaces that have been linked to war (Björkdahl and Kappler, 2017) as a way to rebuild their life projects. We will argue that in the aftermath of a disaster (which involves an extended period of time) in the so-called red zones (an exogenous label made by institutional actors without input from the community), this process of resignification is also present, although under-researched and therefore not fully understood. This presentation will focus on two participative and interdisciplinary research projects: "Ixchel: Building understanding of the physical, cultural and socio-economic drivers of risk for strengthening resilience in the Guatemalan cordillera" (2021-2023) and "School, Territory and Post-conflict: Grounding a local culture of peace in Southern Tolima region, Colombia" (2018-2021). One of the main objectives of these projects is/was to understand community experiences of risk and peace (respectively) by unfolding a decolonial and participatory research process led by community leaders from formal and informal associations. One of the research processes is taking place in Panabaj Canton (Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala), a community that has experienced both war and disasters. This makes its relationship with the territory a very tensioned one; at the same time, though, deeply rooted into it. Our research process has been fuelling a dialogue of knowledges that is creating the space, from the bottom up, to gather different kinds of community experiences and expertise that are unearthing a profound sense of belonging and a process of resignification of their k'aslemaal (territory). On the other hand, the dialogue of knowledges that was facilitated in Southern Tolima region (a stigmatised region where the Colombian guerrilla was initially formed) created a counter-narrative of what territorial peacebuilding means for small farmers, coffee growers, women and youth in this part of the Colombian Andean mountains. After

the end of the research project, and as a result of it, community members have activated and sustained different initiatives that continue to re-signifying their territory.

Key Words

Decolonial research, Guatemala, Colombia, territory, peacebuilding, dialogue, resignifying, knowledge co-creation

Citizens councils as a participatory approach in user-centric algorithm studies: A three-wave participatory project connecting individual experiences to collective recommendations

Authors

Prof. Philip Jackson - University of Surrey

Dr. Rhianne Jones - BBC

Prof. Ranjana Das - University of Surrey

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Abstract

In this paper, a team combining engineering, sociology, communications and media production reflect on the methodological aspects of using “citizens councils” as a participatory method in involving user voices at the heart of technology design, connecting individual user experiences to collective recommendations. This paper presents the development of a participatory process for ethical discovery in relation to an area of technology, so that its findings can guide and inform ethics-related processes throughout technology design and development lifecycle. We refer to this participatory process as a *citizens council*, since it seeks to involve members of the public in ethical design decisions and is inspired by the aims and methods of related participatory work with citizens assemblies, citizens juries and citizens councils.

Our participatory methodology took the form of a three-stage series of workshops in Guildford, Woking and Manchester in the UK, culminating in a final council that brought all the groups together to determine their priorities and recommendations. The technology area that we investigated is media personalisation, a topic of both significant current popular interest and technological development. This paper describes the development of our citizens council approach, discusses its strengths and limitations, before concluding with recommendations and some suggestions for further investigation.

First, we consider the role of participatory research in terms of its ethical role – in relation to building in user voices and citizens’ priorities into technology design. We detail this by demonstrating the longitudinal, three-round approach to citizens’ councils, which we locate intellectually within a long tradition of citizens’ juries and focus groups (c.f. Livingstone & Lunt, 1994; Rogers et al., 2009; Mooney, 2004). We argue that the method prioritised representation, voice, capacity, and investment into the relationships with our participants.

Second, we hone in specifically on two key instruments involved in ensuring the participatory approach both built capacity and drew out normative considerations as well as individual experiences in citizens discussing technological workings which can often be fairly obscure. We do this by detailing the construction of a “booklet” which was used in the councils to explain specific

use cases of data-driven media personalisation, and by detailing the incorporation of “vignettes” – fictitious scenarios involving lay users, as part of our research design.

Finally, we reflect on the council’s final recommendations for good practice in data-driven media personalisation, and draw out the usefulness of our approach more broadly in the context of user-centric AI and algorithm studies (c.f. Bucher, 2018). Here, we reflect particularly on the role of our participatory methodology in terms of giving voice to the citizen interest (c.f. Livingstone and Lunt, 2007), developing user literacies and awareness, building vocabulary, exposing risks and opportunities, deepening knowledge and shared understanding and developing consensus and complexity around themes.

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Key Words

citizens councils; focus groups; methodology; users; algorithms

Towards a circular theory of communication: the case of the Wayusa ritual of the Traditional Kichwa People of Sarayaku

Authors

Dr. Ana Suzina - Loughborough University

Abstract

The *Wayusa* is a community ritual that is part of the exercise of political imagination among the Traditional Kichwa People of Sarayaku, in Ecuador. In this communication, it will be discussed as a case study arguing towards a circular theory of communication, as in a conceptual framework that I advanced in an article published by Revista Chasquí in April 2022. That framework draws upon a theory of communication emerging from the works of Paulo Freire and calls for an approximation with indigenous cosmovisions, looking for epistemological diversity and interdisciplinarity.

Very briefly, the *Wayusa* can be described as a moment to share herbal tea and talk. It takes place at dawn, as Sarayaku tradition involves waking up very early. The homeowner prepares the tea, from a combination of wayusa leaves (*Ilex guayusa*), a plant native to the Amazon, with other herbs, over a fire lit on the patio or in the kitchen of the house. Meanings added to this practice elevate it to a ritual category.

First, there is a purification aspect. According to Sarayaku's cosmovision, the fasting body is "clean" to receive and absorb the medicinal properties of plants more efficiently. Its repetition represents the continued legitimization of natural medicine, practiced by the community. Second, in addition to preparing and protecting the body for the daily journey that is about to begin, there is an aspect of family and community organization. The *Wayusa* is constituted as a participatory decision-making space with binding power. Finally, the *Wayusa* is also the moment to share and interpret dreams, which inscribes this decision-making process in the ancestral rationality of the community.

For the Traditional Kichwa People of Sarayaku, a dream is a vision of what is expected to happen on the days that follow. Lived life is the past of what has already happened in dreams. Thus, sharing dreams, during *Wayusa*, is the opportunity to understand the prognosis and prepare for it, or change it based on the decisions that are taken. For this, it is necessary to "know the code", which implies listening to the community elders. Whether for the revelation of a dream or for sharing that collective moment, the *Wayusa* thus becomes a fundamental ritual in which codes are created and validated between generations, since children participate in it from a very young age.

In this sense, the *Wayusa* can illustrate the role of communication in the knowledge chain in the community of Sarayaku, but it can also describe the kind of communication that it is made of. Following the indigenous cosmovision, it is simultaneously horizontal, vertical, and circular, allowing the constitution of a tridimensional and complementary world. It will therefore be discussed as a contribution to the framework of a circular communication theory whose horizon of transformation is not universalist but based on each space-time context. The participatory

communication dynamics of Sarayaku subscribe to a conceptual framework defined by a humble and yet empowered participation and, therefore, permanently dynamic and open to change.

Key Words

communication theory; participation; indigenous cosmovision; political imagination; political voice

Social Enterprise as the Venue of Media Participation for Immigrants: The Case Study of “New Citizens Television” in Taiwan

Authors

Prof. CHUN-FU CHEN - Fu Jen Catholic University

Abstract

The population of transnational migrants has been increasing in Taiwan over the last two decades. Among them, the number of Southeast Asian immigrants has reached around 570,000. Given the implement of “New Southbound Policy” under the government, the public visibility and human rights protection of Southeast Asian immigrants have been arguably improved in recent years. Nevertheless, when it comes to cultural participation in public spheres like media, Southeast Asian immigrants are apparently still at a big disadvantage.

Lately, scholars in international migration and immigrant studies have called for a research turn to explore the participatory culture of transnational migrants in the post-migrant societies (Appadurai, 2019; Dahlgren, 2019; Foroutan, 2018; Thomas, Kruse, & Stehling, 2019). Deriving from the perspective of “participatory communication”, this study aims at investigating the essence of participation among Southeast Asian immigrants in the media domain of Taiwan. Considering media as the site for intercultural dialogue and interaction, the main purpose of this research is to examine the types of media participation among Southeast Asian immigrants in the host society of Taiwan, and understand the embedded multicultural values and implications of such practices.

Social enterprise and social entrepreneurship play a significant role in facilitating life settlement and self-reliance for immigrants in a multicultural society (Crosbie, 2018; Kong, 2011). The present study chose New Citizens Television (NCTV), the first media-based social enterprise founded by 25 Vietnamese new immigrants in Taiwan, as the case for inquiry. The study thoroughly explored the mechanisms, forms, processes and social relationships manifested in the participatory culture of social entrepreneurship. In-depth interviews were conducted with Vietnamese immigrants and Taiwanese practitioners who, in different ways, take part in business administration and content production at NCTV. By doing so, the study was able to analyze the various dimensions of participatory culture existed in the media participation of Southeast Asian immigrants, and discuss the space for minority empowerment within the media sphere.

Qualitative data drawn from the interviews highlighted the characteristics of NCTV as “the media-by minority” instead of “the media-for minority” (Caspi & Elias, 2011). In addition, the study found that there are three important features of NCTV in fostering intercultural communication – horizontal communication, co-creation and empowerment. By analyzing the dimensions of *access*, *interaction*, *collaboration* and *participation* within the media sphere of NCTV, the findings also revealed the unique intercultural values of social entrepreneurship in the studies of participatory communication and international migration.

Overall, this study looks upon Southeast Asian immigrants as agentive cultural citizens in the current society of Taiwan. Through observing and analyzing the case of NCTV as a venue of media participation for Southeast Asian immigrants in the host society, the study thus delineates the unique ways of social and cultural participation among transnational migrants in the multicultural societies. The findings are expected to shed new light on the studies of participatory communication, and will provide important references for future research in this field.

Key Words

immigrant, media participation, New Citizens Television, participatory culture, social enterprise

Conceptualizing participation: Defining and evaluating participatory processes

Authors

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Prof. Amit Schejter - Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Abstract

This study suggests a method to conceptualize, evaluate, and theorize public participation in policymaking. Participation is a fundamental component of democracy, as it derives from the principle of the people's sovereignty and their ability to shape ways and forms of collective life. In its profound sense, participation is an ideational- awareness concept with political aspects in the broad meaning of the 'polity.' As such, it is an institutional social structure that enables citizens to take an active role in the discussion and decision-making on issues of collective concern. The crisis in Western liberal democracies and the undermined trust in the representational system has raised the importance of seeking new ways to promote civic participation. Defining participation, however, is characterized by fierce debate among scholars, and various approaches highlight different aspects and evaluate participation according to other measures.

Empirically focusing on consultation processes that took place regarding the regulation of network neutrality both in the United States and in Israel (2009-2017), we examine what can be called *participation on the media* (participation of the public in setting policy in the domain of media) and the *mediatization of participation* (the effect of media institution and logic on participation). Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and socio-technical analysis of the use of web-based systems, we find that in all instances an institutionalized architectural design of control was implemented. Such design, though manifested differently in each state, intentionally and methodically pushed the public out of the circle of influence to which decision-makers had to respond. Nevertheless, the differences in the participation processes between the two countries, as well as the differences in the processes' outcomes (both between and inside the countries), were significant and cannot be ignored.

Our analysis leads to the conclusion that any evaluation of a participatory process dictated by its normative result would be theoretically incorrect and academically biased. Hence, we conclude that participation processes should be evaluated separately from the decision-making. Accordingly, we propose a definition for participation and a spatial typology of its occurrences, relying on the relationship between institutionalization and power relations.

Key Words

participation theory, mediatization of participation, civic participation, policy-making consultation,

Two-edge sword: participation concept approaches in Brazil's anti-democratic movement after 2022 elections

Authors

Prof. RAQUEL EVANGELISTA - Universidade Católica de Petrópolis

Prof. FLAVIANO QUARESMA - Universidade Católica de Petrópolis

Abstract

In 2023, Brazil completed 35 years of the Federal Constitution (CF), most known as the Citizen Constitution. It was approved after decades of military dictatorship in the country. It is possible to identify more than 120 changes in the CF nowadays, and some political and social rights that had previously been approved were removed. The recent political changes in the country only threaten to increase violence and racism further. The last four years of government, led by Jair Bolsonaro, were marked by a decrease in freedom of the press, access to public information, and, significantly, in the forms of participation that could reinforce democracy.

Although Lula da Silva took office for the third term in Brazil on the 1st of January 2023, the apex of those political changes occurred one week later, when supporters of the former president invaded the country's Supreme Court and its Congressional building and surrounded the presidential palace in Brasilia. While they were calling for the military to take over Brazil's government, pieces of art, furniture, and part of the place's infrastructure were destroyed. It is also vital to detach the massive number of videos and photos produced by the invaders during the occupation attempt. Immediately, the media, justice agencies, and third-sector entities created reporting channels for the population to help the authorities recognize those responsible for the destruction and the movement's leaders. The result was the creation of pages on social networks, telephone channels, and e-mails, as well as the involvement of digital influencers, which resulted in the recognition of more than 1,100 individuals.

This phenomenon inspired some questions: why a decentralized media strategy was adopted? Which concept or approach of participation can be considered in that scenario? Do all forms of participative collaboration contribute to the maintenance of democracy? Considering Arnstein's ladder as a model for understanding how the degree of citizen participation in government can affect public perceptions and literature review concerning the topic (Moreno, 2006; Carpentier, 2016; Carpentier et al., 2019; Bouchard, 2016; Jenkins & Carpentier, 2019; Lutz, 2017), this work proposes a theoretical reflection on the limits of participation's concept and its eventual political instrumentalization in a democratic environment. To achieve that objective, in addition to the literature review, a descriptive study case was elaborated in which the events mentioned above are related to the concepts inherent to the theme.

Initial results point out that various historical, social, and political conjunctures are an obstacle to a unique understanding of participation and its relationship with media (Carpentier, Melo e Ribeiro, 2019). Regarding social communication, participation theory posits that communication is a crucial

aspect of participation, facilitating the exchange of information and ideas and enabling individuals and groups to coordinate and cooperate in their social and political activities. The theory also highlights the importance of context in shaping participation and communication, as different social and cultural contexts may facilitate or hinder participation and communication.

Considering the case analyzed, it is evident that active and urgent political participation was decisive for those responsible for the destruction of public property and threats to democracy to be held accountable. It is also pointed out that the image records made by the invaders and the easy access to the means of denunciation were decisive elements for political participation.

Key Words

participation, democracy, report

An examination of the climate communication ecosystem to identify existing narratives and develop counter-narratives to inform the climate agenda in Kenya

Authors

Ms. Robi Ochieng - United States International University- Africa

Mr. Denver Ochieng - Center of Media Viability and Development

Abstract

Climate change refers to the long-term shifts in temperatures that influences adverse weather patterns that is attributed to human activity, primarily, the burning of fossil fuels that lead to higher emission of and, retention of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Since 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had had significant accomplishments in raising global awareness about the devastating effects of climate change through events such as the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2016) which have been instrumental in creating awareness about the effects of climate change and its impact on ecological systems that has stifled developmental gains in developing countries. In spite of the fact that climate change is well-known global issue amongst governments, scientists and activists alike, the level of public awareness and sensitization about the severity of climate change as a global issue is low.

This is a perception survey report commissioned for the Hivos 'Voices for Just Climate Action Program (VCA) to explore existing narratives about climate change and climate justice with the key objective of examining the current climate change and climate justice communication ecosystem and, suggest new narratives to frame the climate change agenda to meet the audience needs of the public.

The mixed-method research approach was used in this study. A desktop review was carried out as a trend analysis that provided an historical overview of issues related to climate change and climate justice. This was followed by a media monitoring survey based on the content analysis of stories about climate issues published on legacy print media publications between the period of June 2021 to July 2022. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of respondents for the media, academia, civil society actors and creatives. The third part of the survey was a Monkey survey self-administered questionnaire that gave insights into knowledge, attitude, and practices that the respondents had with regards to climate change and, climate justice. These insights were further discussed in three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu and, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

The findings of the study indicated that the respondents had adequate knowledge about the causes of climate change and the existing narratives were clustered into three key perspectives: ignorance due to cultural and religious driven fatalism, abdication from the responsibility of climate change by developing countries and, the attribution of responsibility for waste

management to women. The findings indicated that there was little knowledge and attention paid to the climate justice agenda mainly because the public viewed this as a western phenomenon agenda.

Recommendations from the study focused on narratives about climate change which require the use of an integrated communication approach to de-mystify cultural and religious fatalism through increased awareness; the curation of indigenous knowledge about climate mitigation strategies; holding intergenerational storytelling sessions and, making the climate agenda a relatable issue rather than viewing it as an agenda driven by the Global North

Key Words

Climate Communication, Climate Change, Climate Justice, Climate Activism in Kenya

En las redes y en las calles: 50 hashtags del activismo feminista latinoamericano

Authors

Dr. Guiomar Rovira Sancho - Universitat de Girona

Abstract

En esta ponencia, se analiza un corpus de 50 hashtags feministas que fueron tendencia en Twitter en México entre 2016 y 2021, y que por su reiterado uso se los caracterizan como *femitags*, marcadores semánticos de una ola de protestas. En su conjunto, conforman un horizonte de sentido, temas, preocupaciones y campañas políticas propias de las multitudes conectadas feministas. Su emergencia en contextos situados, generalmente alrededor de acontecimientos como nuevos casos de violencia y convocatorias en las calles, muestra la profunda imbricación online y offline del activismo social. Algunos hashtags se han extendido como una caja de herramientas para las movilizaciones feministas transnacionales de las mujeres, igual que lo hizo la temprana y larga tradición de la prensa feminista.

Key Words

Feminismos, hashtags, activismo online, multitudes conectadas, feminicidio, #MeToo, #NiUnaMenos, #SiMeMatan

Exploring social justice-frameworks for Communication for Social 'Changemaking'

Authors

Dr. Jessica Noske-Turner - Loughborough University

Abstract

While media and communication for development and social change scholars have been advocating the importance of postcolonial, feminist and anti-capitalist critical frameworks to inform the future of the field (e.g. Dutta, 2011; Tufte, 2017), there is in parallel a very different school of thought taking root within the domain of practice. While the former seeks to resist global capitalism through communication, the latter embraces 'enlightened capitalism' as a solution to social problems and the failings of development. This approach is promoted by the growing chorus of philanthropies and private financing actors in the development space (McGoey, 2015, Moran, 2014, Chakravartty & Saakar, 2013), and associated with shifts in the funding landscape towards increased scarcity and competition for funds (Taggart & Power 2022). This discourse positions everyone, from "street hawkers to elite technologists" (Irani, 2019, p. 2), as well as entrepreneurial celebrities (Chakravartty & Saakar 2013), as ideal 'changemakers'. 'Changemaking', is a term frequently used to garner broad support for the idea that self-made social change leaders with entrepreneurial mindsets as ideally placed to bring about a vaguely defined notion of (positive) social change (Teasdale *et al.*, 2020).

This paper introduces a new research project (project ref: AH/W009242/1) critically investigating what I call 'Communication for Social *Changemaking*'. This project will build on and contribute to an existing body of literature concerned with the growing neoliberal and capitalist influences on CSC, which can often push the responsibility for development onto individuals, exclude the very poor, and ignore the structural and political causes of poverty and injustice (Dutta 2015; Roy, 2010; Irani, 2019; Gurumurthy 2010; Wilkins and Enghel, 2013, Enghel, 2015). Importantly this project aims to learn from and with Southern practitioners to engage directly with these tensions. In doing so, the research recognizes that many practitioners are seeking alternative approaches in a response to the highly precarious and dependent ways of working that characterize current traditional donor funding requirements as they seek ways to sustainably determine their own priority actions and approaches in response to local needs. The project will explore practitioners' adaptations of 'changemaking' discourses, and collaborate towards generating social justice-driven frameworks for Communication for Social Changemaking.

Key Words

communication for social change; changemaking; capitalism; neoliberalism; social entrepreneurship

What is participatory about this project? A case of investigating everyday communicative practices, establishing rapport with interviewees, and rethinking how to take them into account

Authors

Dr. Florencia Enghel - Jönköping University

Abstract

Normative approaches to conducting participatory research, and empirical accounts of participatory research experiences, abound (see e.g. Cornwall, 2011; Burns, Howard & Ospina, 2021). Various defined, they have been a staple of communication and media studies concerned with the dynamics of social change for decades (see e.g. Dervin & Huesca, 1997; Bordenave, 2006; Thomas & van de Fliert, 2014; Jiménez-Martínez, Tufte & Suzina, 2020). In this presentation I reconsider taken-for-granted ideas about ‘participatory communication research’ by reflecting on the differences between designing a research project that depends on the participation of human subjects and putting the design to the test of fieldwork and interaction with those human subjects. Based on qualitative data from, and on a process of doing reflexivity about, an ongoing research project that focuses on the everyday practices of communicative practices of women in Argentina (CORDIS, 2020), I deconstruct the notion of participation implicit in my research design and show how and why I reconstructed it based on lessons learnt by engaging in dialogue with the women who volunteered to act as my interviewees. Importantly, I show that preventive ethical clearance granted prior to fieldwork by university research boards and/or national ethical review agencies does not suffice to ensure that willing participants will be fairly taken into account as such. Participation, I argue, depends on a combination of factors, including (but not limited to): a systematic disposition to listen to research participants and take notice of the everyday challenges they face (Bassel, 2017), a commitment to dedicating time and space to reflexivity while in the process of collecting fieldwork data and rapidly assessing initial findings (Dean, 2017), and the flexibility to revise one’s own ideas as a researcher of what participation might mean in a specific context (Phillips, Christensen-Strynø & Frølund, 2021). All things considered, “well-meant” may equate “top-down” approaches if we think of ‘granting participation’. Acknowledging that participation starts the moment that the subjects of our investigation agree to volunteering their time to meet with us may help us reconsider what researching with care means in practice. Researching with care (Brannelly & Barnes, 2022) is crucial at a time of increasing precariousness (Lorey, 2015).

Key Words

qualitative research, communicative practices, participation, doing reflexivity

From Prosumers to Moderators: Users' Participation in Content Moderation on a Chinese Social Media Platform

Authors

Ms. Zheyu Shang - Leiden University

Abstract

Digital platforms are flourishing with user-generated content, benefiting from participatory culture. However, this increase in content and creative expressions poses challenges to platforms' ability to detect content violations. In China, digital platforms are held accountable for reviewing online content under current laws and regulations. Legal pressure and the sheer amount of user-generated content require platforms to innovate content moderation mechanisms and improve content moderating ability. Bilibili, a popular video-sharing platform in China, established the disciplinary committee (风纪委员会) in 2017, inviting ordinary users to participate in judging content violations and exchanging ideas on content moderation. The case of the disciplinary committee reflects the transformation of users' role from prosumers to content moderators and the application of participatory culture in content moderation. While there is a large volume of research on users' participation in content production, there is limited research on their participation in content moderation. Existing literature on platform governance and content moderation mostly base on Western platforms, and platforms in the Chinese context receive little attention. With a focus on the participatory content moderation mechanism on Bilibili, this research aims to fill the knowledge gap by investigating users' active participation in content moderation and the impact of participatory culture on platform governance. This study aims to fill the knowledge gap by investigating users' participation in content moderation on Bilibili, their perceptions of that participation, and its impact on platform governance. Through in-depth interviews with other disciplinary committee members and participant observation from more than 200 content violation judgment cases in which the author has participated, this research argues that the embedment of participatory culture in content moderation allows users to deeply and broadly participate in the entire online content ecosystem. As a result, users can not only produce and consume content but also moderate content. On the other hand, tension exists in two dimensions. First is the tension among committee members, which is reflected in case judgments and indicates the different perceptions of platform rules. Second is the tension between committee members and the platform. While providing users access to content moderation, the participatory content moderation mechanism strengthens platform power by exploiting users' volunteer work and data to reduce costs and improve platform algorithms. As the first research on the participatory content moderation mechanism in the Chinese context from a user-centric perspective, this study expands the discussion of participatory culture to the realm of content moderation and platform governance. It sheds light on users' multiple roles and dynamic power relations with digital platforms.

Key Words

Participatory culture, content moderation, governance, platforms, Bilibili

Communication for Development and/or Social Change across the Americas: A Critical-Qualitative Analysis of “Change” in Anglo- and Latin-American Journals

Authors

Dr. Adriana Angel - Universidad de La Sabana

Dr. Anna Wolfe - Texas A&M University

Dr. Antonio La Pastina - Texas A&M University

Abstract

Following the call of the Participatory Communication Research (PCR) Section, our study analyzes the similarities and differences in how Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC) is conceived and practiced across the Americas. Since the 1960s, scholars in Africa and Latin America have problematized the notion of development and critically deconstructed it in order to suggest new paradigms in which communication can help communities to improve their lived conditions through social change (Dragon & Tufté, 2006). Even though the history of the field of CDSC is well documented (see, for example, Barranquero & Angel, 2014; Barranquero, 2011; González et al, 2022), it is not easy to find studies that comparatively analyze the dynamics of the field in different regions. Thus, we analyze the current scholarship of CDSC published in Anglo-American (Canada and the United States) and Latin-American (Mexico, Central America, and South America) journals in order to discuss regional influences in the ways in which scholars understand, study, and accomplish social change.

To that end, we selected 25 communication journals that, in their scope and aims, include an interest in publishing articles related to CDSC. We considered journals published by communication associations and universities taking into account the regional dynamics of scholarship in Anglo-America and Latin-America. From an initial list of 2761 articles retrieved using the terms “communication for development” and “social change”, we selected 420 that might be presumably included in the field. Within this final set we systematically analyzed how change is accomplished or suggested in scholarship, who is the agent of change, what are the main analytical focus to approach change, and which are the main target populations.

The data analysis allows us to see the following relationships of continuity and disruption in the study of CDSC in two communities of practice across the Americas. First, there is a regional fragmentation according to which the disciplinary practices and the canon of the field (that is, representative authors, theoretical frames, journals, and associations) differ across regions. Second, despite the criticism to the concept of development, the actual distinction between development and change becomes blurry and loose as both notions usually tend to cluster around the same terms such as overcoming, improvement, communities, diversity, and representation.

Third, Latin-American journals predominately offer a somewhat restricted understanding of social change, which mainly refers to access to media communication and to diversity in the symbolic representation of communities. In contrast, Anglo-American journals invoke the language of “social change” to describe a wide range of activities including social justice initiatives, social movement organizing, and political advocacy and activism. Finally, several articles in Latin American journals seem to reproduce a romanticization of the field and a nostalgia for the ideas and authors of the 1960’s. While some of these tribute articles appear in Anglo American journals, they are rarer; the focus in Anglo American journals are more often empirical studies, usually using the language of “social change” in ways that are largely disconnected from the rich history of CDSC.

Key Words

Social change; Anglo-America; Latin America

Imagining climate change in crisis

Authors

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Dr. Tina Askanius - malmö university

Mx. Sila Latz - Copenhagen business school

Dr. Daniel Lundgaard - Copenhagen business school

Abstract

Accounts of the potential for social media platforms to provide opportunities for activists to push their causes up the political agenda continue to remain hopeful if no longer optimistic (e.g. Wonneberger et al., 2020), not least in relation to the climate crisis (Neuman et al., 2014). Against this backdrop, the COVID-19 pandemic was seen as an opportunity to envision and call for solutions to the climate crisis among climate activists (Authors, 2020). In this article, we examine how this played out as the pandemic wore on and opened up possibilities for seeing the world differently (Van De Wiele and Papacharissi, 2021, p. 1143). In doing so, we focus on the ways in which activists used Twitter to imagine the climate crisis in their efforts to affect the political agenda.

Theoretically, we draw on the notion of climate imaginaries (Levy & Spicer, 2013), which describes “socio-semiotic systems that structure a field around a set of shared understandings” (p. 659). This means uncovering articulations that express understandings of the climate crisis, its root causes and possible solutions. To investigate how activists use imaginaries in their efforts to influence the political agenda, we draw on agenda-setting theory, which concerns efforts to bring attention to certain issues and to emphasize certain aspects of these over others (McCombs et al., 2014).

Empirically, we focus on three branches of climate activist organizations (Greenpeace, Extinction Rebellion and FridaysForFuture). In total, we study 4,492 tweets from the three organizations, spanning a time-period of sixteen months before the first COVID-19 lockdown and the following eighteen months. Our analysis covers both first-level agenda-setting, i.e., the attention to different imaginaries over time, as well as second-level agenda-setting, which considers how the imaginaries are articulated, including assignment of responsibility.

In doing so, we contribute to the literature on digitally enabled activism and agenda-setting by highlighting the role of imaginaries in assigning responsibility, that is, in efforts to put an issue on the political agenda *and* calling for action from societal actors. e.g. political or corporate. On the basis of this, we argue that Twitter may enable activists to try to influence the political agenda and assign responsibility by invoking particular understandings of the climate. However, after the initial shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, the asymmetrical relations of power between activists and the political system were not destabilized in ways that enabled activists to challenge dominant climate imaginaries. Nevertheless, it may have destabilized power relations between corporations and the

political system, leading activists to grasp this moment and articulate politicians as potential heroes with the power – and, not least, responsibility – to regulate business. Taken together, our findings contribute to understandings of crises beyond the COVID crisis as moments of rupture that open up possibilities for reimagination and seeing the world differently, especially in relation to the climate crisis (Kaun, 2016; Van De Wiele and Papacharissi, 2021).

Key Words

Climate change, climate imaginaries, crisis, agenda setting, social media

Utilizing Service-Learning Courses as Communication Interventions for Development and Social Change: A Case Study

Authors

Dr. Pinar Umul Unsal - Izmir University of Economics

Ms. Serra Evci - Izmir University of Economics

Abstract

Sustainability by definition refers to any and all activity that enables the long term existence of a desired condition. In terms of inhabiting the planet, sustainability has become an indispensable way of co-existing in today's societies. Sustainability goals can be considered as a promise to the future, by not only acting responsibly without jeopardizing or incapacitating the future generations but also empowering them through substantial and proactive solutions. Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC) has a pivotal role in creating and maintaining a sustainable future. Within the scope of CDSC, interventions that would contribute to creating long term effects among societal issues can be designed. While traditional media and technology-assisted modes of communication such as social media greatly assist interventions, interpersonal modes of communication also carry significance for reaching individuals and groups at various levels of societies (Servaes, 2020).

Higher education institutions are among many agents which have influencing power on development and social change. Courses and activities designed with an emphasis on service-learning approach can serve as a CDSC intervention by actively engaging students in the process. In Turkish universities, for example, courses which touch upon the subjects of social responsibility, community service, civic participation and volunteerism are offered. This paper aims to present a case study of an undergraduate course at a Turkish university, which incorporates the efforts of students, course instructors, and multiple stakeholders (local and national institutions, and non-governmental organizations) on creating behavior change in students and social change within the community. Designed with the contributions of UNICEF Turkiye, this course is offered as a university-wide elective by instructors specialized in the field of communication. Students enrolled in this single semester course are expected to actively participate in volunteering projects by joining stakeholders in on-site activities and acting as their representatives. Since the course has started to be offered in 2017, various projects have been undertaken under the themes of children's rights, combating hate speech against refugee children and disadvantaged groups, body shaming, animal rights, gender equality and women's rights, health literacy, and infodemic management; all of which are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, projects which address waste management, climate change and disaster management, and sustainable cities have been designed and implemented. Throughout their volunteering project, students have paid multiple visits to primary schools, community centers and neighborhoods within the city where disadvantaged children and citizens live. In order

to facilitate social change in the community for the end goal of creating a sustainable future, students positioned as agents have communicated key messages on sustainability by informing target audiences in a participatory and natural setting where they engaged in conversation and freely interacted with one another. The original value of this course is inducing attitude and behavior change in students through an experiential learning process consisting of education, self-education and interpersonal communication. The collaborative nature of this course is thought to provide a best practice example on how educational efforts can serve as CDSC interventions.

Key Words

service learning, CDSC, sustainability, higher education

From 'beneficiary subject' to 'participant' – the potential for power sharing in the creation of humanitarian narratives.

Authors

Ms. Jess Crombie - University of the Arts London

Abstract

This paper will explore two questions. Firstly, why do the people living through humanitarian crises agree to participate in fundraising and engagement by sharing their stories? Secondly, can the humanitarian sector facilitate greater participation and even power sharing in the creation of narratives?

We will answer the first question by investigating research findings from my study, *The People in the Pictures*, which interviewed over 200 people who had featured in global NGO Save the Children's communications and fundraising materials. Paulo Freire stated that "to alienate humans from their own decision making is to change them into objects" (Freire, 1970, p85), and this process of objectification is well illustrated in this study. Interviewees were found to share their stories because they were desperate; "we thought that as we are in a helpless state it will be helpful for us" (Warrington & Crombie, 2017, p26) and because they wanted to "give something back" (ibid, p24). However, the predominant reason was because participants had a sophisticated understanding of communications practices, and their potential impact, and wanted to have power to make decisions about what story was told and how; "I want to take the photos, not be an object" (ibid, p55).

We will investigate the second question with data gathered from my more recent *Who Owns the Story* study, in partnership with Kenyan NGO Amref Health Africa. This project sought to facilitate participants to create their own fundraising materials, investigating how much power a participant can have as the creator of these materials, and how donors would respond. A blind A/B test in the form of a direct mail leaflet was released to donors in the UK. One leaflet was created by Patrick Malachi, a participant in Kenya, the other by Amref in the house style. The study mirrored findings from *The People in the Pictures* in terms of participant responses with Malachi commenting that he liked being able to "tell my own story...from the bottom as it comes up" (Crombie & Girling, 2022, 25). Donors responded positively financially and in terms of preferring narratives that challenged stereotypes, stating that "it's good to see the old paternalistic model of charitable donation give way to a realisation that Africans are capable of making their own decisions about how to help their community" (Crombie & Girling, 2022, 25). However, we can also see limitations in terms of power sharing, most seriously the risk of instrumentalising participants for a pre-defined narrative by the facilitating organisation.

The paper will conclude that there is potential for power sharing. But that, to borrow from Giyatri Spivak's seminal text 'Can the Subaltern Speak', the participant is too often a "marionette" (Spivak, 1988, p70) being both represented and re-presented. If the site of power is in the adding of voice

to narrative decisions, then there is a need for actions which include participants not just in sharing their experiences, but in broader editorial decision making through the process.

Key Words

Humanitarian, Participation, Storytelling, Power sharing, Voice, Choice

Community Participation in Just Coal Transition(s): insights from the field of Communication for Social Change

Authors

Dr. Maria Touri - University of Leicester

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Abstract

Coal-fired power plants are the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions, and in the last decade, coal transition programs are being implemented across the world. Although a just transition process requires a holistic approach that considers the interests and needs of all, so far decarbonisation has been a top-down affair with limited community participation, across Europe and in the African, Asian, and Latin American regions. The paper discusses how the field of just energy/coal transition can benefit from a dialogue with the Communication for Social Change (CfSC) discipline. CfSC can offer conceptual and methodological yardsticks to support knowledge development and practice.

We draw specifically from CfSC's 'third generation' model that is inspired by Thomas Tufte's 'citizen perspective' and emphasises dialogue and collective action (Tufte, 2017). We engage closely with two ideas. The first idea is that social change and social justice is predicated on cognitive justice, and the advancement of new epistemologies. These are based on bottom-up knowledge production and a plurality of alternative knowledges and practices that are critical for tackling ongoing issues such as climate change (Gurumurthy, 2018; Santos, 2014). The field of just energy transition is characterised by a scholarly trend towards simple definitions and universal discourses that are based on Western notions of social change; and undermine the priorities and knowledge of local and marginalised communities, glossing over how hard it is to implement just transitions in practice. (Castán Broto et al, 2018; White, 2020). CfSC's emphasis on cognitive justice highlights that by moving beyond ethnocentric approaches, research can contribute to the valorisation of local knowledges and a better understanding of the complex nature of just energy transition.

The second idea concerns the role of communication practices in everyday life and the formation of discursive spaces that enable citizens to participate in bottom-up governance (Tufte, 2017). Unlike environmental studies where citizen participation in policy making processes is conceptualised and operationalised via processes that are tied to liberal democracies (e.g. public consultation) CfSC provides the tools to identify citizen participation opportunities through communication, dialogue and the development of localized knowledge bases. Identifying these opportunities is critical not just for researching but also for supporting the planning of just energy transition programs.

We support this discussion with preliminary findings from the energy transition program that is currently underway in Western Macedonia, Greece, where community participation in the

planning has been non-existent. Drawing from peer-led, participatory focus groups with affected local communities; and discussion forums organised by local government groups, we unearth situated narratives and discourses of what 'just' transition entails, and how it relates to notions of social change and social justice. Moreover, we discuss if and to what extent these community-based discursive spaces contribute to local knowledge production; and if/how such local knowledges can make their way to the centre enabling citizens to participate in bottom-up governance. Finally, our study aims to contribute to the advancement of CfSC itself, and the need for the field to engage with communication-social change connections beyond countries in the Global South.

Key Words

just energy transition, community, participation, cognitive justice, discourses, Greece

Empowering People through Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal: Analyzing Situation and Promoting Infant Feeding Health Literacy

Authors

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Abstract

Global health communication projects have brought significant changes in Infant and Young Child Feeding practices (IYCF). However, many health communication interventions are lackadaisical and failed to ensure active true participation, transfer the ownership of the project to the beneficiaries and ensure sustainability due to their overly generic, pseudo-participatory, and mechanistic communication approaches. A review of previous literature indicates that the efforts to promote IYCF practices are globally inclined towards behavior change communication (BCC). However, BCC approaches are paternalistic, disregard equal sharing of decision-making power, and do not work on the causes of the causes (Laverack, 2017). As a result, poor IYCF practices are still widely apparent and prevalent across the globe. Further, researchers have also argued that health literacy is an important indicator of health outcomes as people with higher health literacy are found to have better health conditions. This calls for a shift from BCC to alternative communication approaches. Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) offers a good alternative (Anyaegbunam et al., 2004) as it allows equitable participation of all stakeholders in every stage of the decision-making process. Moreover, it also balances the existing power imbalances of society by creating congenial democratic spaces for communication and collective action. PRCA is drawn from the transformative paradigm and is best captured by the convergence model of Rogers and Kincaid (1981). The convergence model regards communication as a horizontal process between the sender and the receiver with the ultimate objective of reaching a level of mutual understanding. The horizontal communication here is derived from Paulo Freire's notion of critical pedagogy which proposes the use of dialogic communication for empowerment, liberation, emancipation, and conscientization of the marginalized section. Researchers have applied Participatory approaches in various disciplines but there is a dearth of literature on the applicability of participatory design for IYCF health literacy. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to address this gap by adopting a Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) as an alternative approach to promote the IYCF health literacy of a rural community at Gaya, India. The integration of participatory design to promote health literacy is justifiable as they both share the same conceptual basis i.e. the empowerment of the people. Empowerment refers to a process by which Individual or community gain control of their lives and can make decisions to improve their current state (White, 2003; Rogers and Singhal, 2003). Hence, it is justifiably argued that once people are empowered they will be liberated from the shackles of hegemonic external interventions by taking absolute control over means of their health determinants. Thus, the study is objectivized to analyze the current situation, identify the interaction groups, find the focal

problems, and design a participatory communication strategy to promote the IYCF health literacy of the ruralites. Optimal IYCF practices are important indicators of development as they play an important role in curbing child morbidity and mortality and improving the nutritional status of a country.

Key Words

BCC, Convergence model, Empowerment, Health literacy, Horizontal communication, IYCF, PRCA

Civic Technology Participation in Extension Programs: The Case of a State University in Region IV-A Philippines

Authors

Ms. Racquel Agustin - Cavite State University

Dr. Maria Stella C. Tirol - University of Philippines Los Banos

Abstract

Civic technology refers to tools and processes using information and communication technology to solve a development problem and improve quality of life. Civic tech provides a space where citizens can participate in extension programs via online portals, mobile websites, and instant messaging platforms. Civic technology becomes more relevant as a participatory strategy during the Covid-19 pandemic when extension delivery shifted to the online mode. While civic technology research focused mostly on e-government, e-democracy, and political systems, its application in development initiatives to achieve social change is scant.

The study explored how stakeholders of a state university in the Philippines situate themselves in civic technology as participatory development approach. Guided by Roberts and Hernandez's concepts of civic technology and citizen participation technologies, it described the stakeholders' information and communication technology capacities; determined their level of e-participation; and analyzed the degree of change resulting from civic technology.

The study utilized the explanatory sequential mixed method design. A total of 126 online extension program participants responded to an online survey and five purposively selected survey participants joined the in-depth interview. Data were analyzed using frequencies and means and through textual coding and analysis.

Results showed that the extension stakeholders of Cavite State University were single, female, young, attained college education, and worked in professional or technical-related jobs or were continuing students. They shared their internet connection with six family members in the household. They had high level of information and communication technology capacities. Their level of civic technology participation focused on e-involving, e-collaborating, and e-empowering. The stakeholders felt they were not just informed and consulted but were involved, had collaboration, and felt empowered during the online implementation of extension programs in Cavite State University. They perceived that civic technology has led to reforming systems, people, and processes in development initiatives and still has to reach transformation. A framework for civic technology was proposed with recommendations on how to improve civic technology. Overall, civic technology participation has a great potential in implementing extension and development programs and activities in state universities as reflected in this study.

Key Words

civic technology, e-participation, information and communication technology, extension and development

Digital Participatory Communication for Development ----A Case Study of the Seminar Held by International Poverty Reduction Center in China

Authors

Ms. Lu Liu - Communication University of China

Abstract

Participatory development communication highlights the importance of participation and sustainability of development. However, there is still a blank in developing a new participatory communication model within developing countries when the accelerated digitization process also offers a possibility of social change.

China has been providing foreign aid projects to other developing countries as an important player in Global South-South cooperation. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the end of 2019, foreign aid training programs have begun to move online. Therefore, seminars on poverty reduction for officers from developing countries held by International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC) have changed from offline lectures and field visits to online lectures and digital participation through Voov meeting or Zoom. The online programs provide a practical basis for this paper to investigate the mechanism and effect of digital participatory communication for development.

Based on the literature review of *Participatory Development*, *Platformization* and *Actor-Network-Theory (ANT)*, combined with five-months participatory observations during these seminars, the following research questions are investigated:

1. What role do Chinese officers or organizers play in the Network for knowledge exchange in poverty reduction?
2. Does participatory communication based on virtual communities really benefit local development?
3. In the virtual space, what are the characteristics of participation communication?
4. What role do non-humans -- organizations and platforms play in enabling virtual communities and online windows for sharing experiences?

Though based on Latour's Actor Network Theory, in order to distinguish the concept of *actor* in ANT, this study highlights the initiative of participants, and innovatively uses *participant* instead of *actor*. Moreover, this paper adopts three research methods: multi-agent in-depth interview, participatory observation and textual analysis. Twelve officials who participated in this program from seven countries, including the Planning & Development Commission of Ethiopia, Ministry of Youth, Sport And Child Development of Zambia, the Ministry of Education of Iraq and so on were interviewed. Additionally, textual materials about IPRCC and interactive texts among participants in the online workshop were collected and analyzed. And the non-human factors -- organization and ICTs were also explored in this study.

In conclusion, this study found that when participatory development communication shifts to an online approach, the original research scope should be expanded. Thus, the participation of the organizer, Chinese personnel, can be emphasized on its role of reducing poverty within developing countries. Meanwhile, the importance of *empowerment* needs to be noted in participatory development. Although the participation motivation contains the epitome of elitism, it still promotes the local development process, so it should to be treated dialectically. Furthermore, organization and technology, as non-human actors, still play structural functions in this network.

The study also found that China still needs to be mindful of the trap of unequal dependency on its way to explore a new communication mode between developing countries in the participatory communication based on online platforms, which is different from the traditional Western mode.

Key Words

participatory development, development communication, online platform, actor network theory

Inheritance and inhabitancy: The material place-making practices of community radio

Authors

Dr. Bridget Backhaus - Griffith University

Abstract

Community radio occupies an important place within contemporary media landscapes, acting as a 'third space' outside the realms of commercial and state-based broadcasting. This positioning outside the private and public domains situates community radio as an intermediary – a part of civil society (Carpentier et al., 2007; Thompson, 1995). While not without limitations and by no means beyond reproach, community radio is a space for cultural expression, political voice, community discussions, and debate – a space for democratised access to media production and self-representation. There is, of course, a material level to these theoretical constructions of community radio: community radio stations may act as important community spaces and meeting points for diverse groups and movements. Therein lies the importance of the physical, material places of community radio stations. However, the materiality of community radio stations is often liminal and occasionally precarious, particularly given the fickle nature of funding and resourcing. Thus, the DIY place-making practices of community radio stations have a critical role to play in establishing the accessibility and overall feel of the physical space – both key contributing factors to the participatory and deliberative environments.

There is a small but robust body of literature on the sonic place-making effects of community radio in terms of developing local identities and delineating different communities, yet the physical placemaking practices and impacts are less explored. There is relatively little work on how community radio stations, many of which occupy insecure and occasionally inapposite spaces, enact material place-making practices. Cresswell (2004) suggests that space becomes place where meaning is added through place-making activities. Some community radio stations invest significant time and resources into place-making activities to craft an identity or cultivate a particular culture. Others are bound by the logistical, financial, and physical limitations of the spaces they occupy. Place-making practices, be they deliberate or incidental, big or small, have significant implications for the lived experiences of participating in community broadcasting and, subsequently, who is able to participate, and the extent to which this participation occurs.

Drawing on case studies from both India and Australia, this paper explores the processes and impacts of place-making practices within community radio stations. These practices vary significantly between stations: while some stations have, by chance or design, negotiated places that align with their culture and identity, others must engage in iterative and reactive processes of place-making. The findings of this research suggest that the materiality of community radio stations has a significant impact on how space is negotiated and used by practitioners and stakeholders. The agency exercised and meaning embedded through place-making activities are

key factors in situating community radio stations as both integral parts of their communities and civil society more broadly.

Key Words

community radio, place-making, participation, practice

Dissent heuristics: An experimental study on the polarization of online public opinion

Authors

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Abstract

Social media naturally endows individuals, events, groups and disputes with "behavioural visibility". To some extent, excessive visibility expands the connotation of the public sphere. Therefore, individual online behaviour is more likely to evolve from micro motivation to macro behaviour as described in traditional game theory. As a typical form of participatory communication, the information cascade triggered by danmaku comments started by individuals who lack much non-public information (even though sometimes they have such information) paying close attention to the information contained in other people's words or behaviours.

The purpose of this study is to explore whether danmaku comments on mainstream news videos with opposite views will have an impact on public attitudes. Some existing studies show that cognitive dissonance will occur when individuals realise that their opinions are contrary to those of others. This cognitive dissonance is related to the group size and the degree of disagreement. The greater the exposure to rebuttal information, the greater the degree of attitudinal change. Our research derives from the "Cognitive Dissonance Theory" to explore what factors determine people's extreme attitudes in an online environment where contradictory information is normalised. We choose two news videos on China's largest video website as experimental materials, and the content of the videos is in evident opposition to netizens' danmaku comments. We randomly assigned 650 subjects to the "no comments" group or the "with comments" group. We conduct a basic attitude test and post-test on the subjects. The research shows that: 1. Contact with contradictory information will definitely bring the extreme trend of group opinions, and the group opinions will significantly change from the normal distribution to both ends; 2. Cognitive dissonance brought by danmaku comments as dissent is the most critical moderating factor for attitude change; 3. Rational thinkers have a low degree of persuasion, and the primary mechanism is that analytical thinkers have a lower degree of cognitive dissonance under the same circumstances. This study provides data and insights to better understand online groups' polarization problem. The discovery of rational thinkers' cognitive dissonance adjustment ability is conducive to further exploring the construction of a more rational online discussion environment.

Key Words

polarization; Cognitive Dissonance; rational thinkers; danmaku comments

Dancing in Public Baths: The Communicative Figuration of Dama Community in China's Rustbelt city

Authors

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Abstract

Most research on urban communication focus on the first-tier metropolis and young people, lacking discussion of cases that portray people's urban experience in *shrinking cities*, especially those who seem unable to integrate into the digital media urban environment, such as senior people.

This study developed the 'communicative figuration' theoretical framework from Elias and Hepp to grasp the community-specific communication pattern in the urban space. We aim to depict the mediatization of urban life in *Shenyang*, a rustbelt city in northeastern China, and the communicative figuration of senior women's community in public baths. These women are often called *Dama* or *Shenyang Dama* by the mainstream, who experienced the drastic change from socialist collectivism in Mao's era to the privatization and commercialization of work and leisure in post-socialist China.

By conducting a 3-month ethnography, the main findings were obtained through participant observation and semi-structural interview in 12 public baths in *Shenyang*. Specifically, we conduct interviews with the community of *Dama* who take activities in public spaces after bathing and observe the process in which they form new communication patterns or communicative figuration through interaction with space, material, and media.

In this study, we first explain why 'going to public baths' become such a popular urban leisure activity in *Shenyang*, and the history from 'public baths in socialism' to 'commercial baths in urban life' from the perspective of 'meta-processes' including gentrification and mediatization. In this context, public baths can be considered as the *figurative quality* in citizen's life in *Shenyang*, which provides a potential for weaving local and community communicative figuration. Then we followed the theoretical framework of 'communicative figuration' to examine how the communicative figuration of China's *Dama*'s cultural experiences in public baths. Lastly, we discussed the sociocultural and technological reasons behind such communicative figuration.

Findings reveal that *Dama* try to domesticate the sauna room of public baths as a space for group dancing, and by using O2O platforms like *Meituan/Tiktok* to build an online community and extend social relationships. Therefore, this study contributes to partly breaking current stereotypes of the elderly as vulnerable ones who had been abandoned by the digital divide by revealing their positive engagement on digital platforms. Moreover, we made theoretical contributions to breaking the dichotomy of Determinism versus Intermediary by showcasing the interaction

between patriarchal norms, digital technologies, and communicative figuration in a particular urban context.

We critically emphasized the significance of media in Dama's dancing activities, including extending social networking, searching for more useful information like vouchers and events, and establishing online communities to create novel subcultures. Most importantly, digital media performed as an effective tool to allow for Dama's fight against social stigma against them as uncivilized and noisy groups. This, in turn, encouraged them to exert more agency to attend dancing events. However, we also argued that there are server digital gaps limiting those old women's media consumption. In all, digital media has facilitated to sustain and develop the nature of traditional local cultures in Northeastern China as being open-minded, creative, and enthusiastic while maintaining ingrained digital divide issues.

Key Words

Urban Communication, Mediatization, Communicative Figuration, Public Baths, Chinese Dama

App Activism and Negotiated Politics in the Digital Age: Towards a Typology

Authors

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Abstract

The rapid growth and expansion of apps and super apps have rendered apps a significant social, political and cultural power, which has in turn invited more critical and alternative approaches to these mobile devices. Moreover, apps have become the interfaces and transducers that collect and transmute social behaviours, locations and biological information into data, facilitating the datafication process and governance. Apps are both informational commodities and governance tools, allowing entry into the macro power structure. Current studies have examined the app economy and the infrastructural nature of apps, super apps in particular. While apps constitute the economic and governing power, they also contain possibilities for agency and alternative use.

In this paper, we propose the idea of app activism to explore activism via apps, in apps, and for apps. App activism is brewed under the rubric of a mobile and datafied society, and it is a form of digital activism and constitutes an important part of digital citizenship. App activism focuses on the practices of activism via the use of apps for bottom-up agency. In this sense, similar to data activism, app activism reclaims the agency of app use for social justice and good.

In this research, we have delineated the main actors, the power relations and dynamics, and the major forms and categories of app activism. We have categorized app activism into three forms: apps as connecting tools, as a contesting space and as crowdsourcing databases. We argue that while the activist use and ideals have empowered apps, apps also enable new forms of activism, activism that is deeply interwoven into and embedded within everyday life. We situate our app activism studies within the context of Taiwan, as we have mainly studied cases and practices from Taiwan. However, this should not limit the applicability of the idea of app activism, as we believe app activism has emerged and risen across the world and our conceptual framing and analysis can traverse the micro- and macro-practices and regional- and global- boundaries to provide some insights into current studies of apps and digital activism. Our research draws on various scholarly works including app studies, data activism and digital activism, and we invite scholars who are interested in this emerging field to further discuss and develop the idea and research into app-related forms of activism. This research is expected to make a new contribution to app studies.

Key Words

App activism, data activism, digital activism, NGOs, datafication

Reviewing while Consuming: A Case Study on Dianping Users' Media Prosumption

Authors

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Abstract

Public Review (*Dazhongdianping*, called *Dianping* for short) is the world's earliest third-party consumer review website. It has become the leading social media platform for consumers to share comments in China. As typical Web 2.0 online prosumers, the users of *Dianping* make consumption decisions based on massive user-generated word-of-mouth information. Interestingly, although users are not paid, many of their reviews are not limited to words or simple comments but are well-organized with paragraphs and pictures. Why do people enjoy doing this? Why are they willing to produce reviews elaborately without any payments? This research aims to investigate how *Dianping* users consent to unpaid review labor and understand how they interact with the platform as well as marketing institutions while participating in consumer cultural production.

In-depth interviews (N=22) with an average time of 40 minutes are conducted. All of the 22 respondents are actively involved *Dianping* users with higher user levels (Lv5-Lv8). Their review posts are also collected as a part of research materials with informed consent. Besides, to further examine *Dianping* users' actual practice, the researcher participated in a 4-month participant observation by posting reviews and interacting with other users regularly.

The research found that *Dianping* manufactured users' consent by providing a monthly lucky draw game to win the prize of free lunch (*Bawangcan*). To gain the game qualification, users accepted assignments of posting 4 reviews per month to maintain their VIP status. Potential benefits, in the first place, motivated the user to post reviews regularly. Later, they made up the review numbers, hid their performances, and restricted their output to ensure they hold the VIP status every month. Eventually, the habits of online reviewing were developed. After in-depth use of *Dianping*, the account visibility of high-level users became a commodity between marketers and ordinary users. During the visibility trade, an ordinary user can obtain economic concessions by providing online reviews (positive votes usually) while the merchants can get word-of-mouth by free service or discount. However, the authenticity and thought expression of the reviews were lost.

Meanwhile, although the users were at a structural disadvantage compared to the platform and marketing forces, they gave full play to their initiative. They can reduce production frequency in response to the reduction of platform economic compensation. They can use various identification skills to circumvent fake marketing content tactically. More importantly, they can utilize the review platform to record personal life and participate in the narrative of urban consumer culture.

This article describes how *Dianping* users consent to unpaid review labor. It also explains how the users' interaction with dominant forces affects their cultural production. The article points out a close relationship between the unpaid labor status of Web 2.0 platform users and the chaos of

illegal marketing disorder. The research findings can be used to explain prosumer practices on other online review platforms in China, such as *Taobao* and *Meituan*. The article concludes by discussing the implications of research findings for future research on internet consumers' prosumption and its' limits.

Key Words

prosumer; digital labor; consumer participation; internet marketing; online review platform

Research on Influencing Factors of the Cognition of Chaozhou Gongfu Tea Culture among the Generation Z of Chaoshan area: Based on the Embodied Perspective

Authors

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Abstract

In Chaoshan area (east coast of Guangdong Province, China), tea drinking has long been a daily lifestyle for local people. As the representative of the project “Chinese Traditional Tea Making Techniques and Related Customs”, Chaozhou Gongfu Tea was successfully selected in the national intangible cultural heritage list by UNESCO in 2022. Chaozhou Gongfu Tea culture, a highly embodied and situational activity, has unique regional characteristic and complex programme with significant participation, experience and interaction. Therefore, it has been inherited through intergenerational communications within families for thousands of years. Nowadays, the changes of the times and the rapid development of society have increased the differences in values, behavior orientation and cultural preferences between different intergenerational groups. Generation Z, the “digital natives” of the Internet age, are greatly influenced by digital information technology, instant messaging devices and smart phone products. Will the social environment, media use, and educational background and life experience different from the older generation affect Chaoshan Generation Z’s cognition of Gongfu Tea culture? What are the core-factors that influence the cognition of Gongfu Tea culture of Chaoshan Generation Z? What influence does their overall cognitive status bring to the inheritance of Chaozhou tea culture? These are the questions that this research seeks to explore.

To answer the questions mentioned above, this study intends to focus on the characteristics and the influencing factors of Chaozhou Gongfu Tea culture cognition of Chaoshan Generation Z by adopting a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research. First of all, based on the grounded theory method, this study conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with 15 Chaoshan Generation Z, extracted the factors affecting the cognition of the Chaozhou Gongfu Tea culture of Chaoshan Generation Z, constructed the research model, and proposed the research hypothesis. Secondly, questionnaire survey was used to collect data in a larger range, SPSS24.0 was used to test the reliability and validity of the measurement model, and AMOS21.0 was used to test confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Then, the goodness of fit index of the model was used to investigate the degree of fit between the model and the data, and the research model was modified. Finally, the parameters of the hypothesis model of influencing factors were estimated by the maximum pseudo estimation method (ML).The research objectives of this thesis is to describe the current situation about the cognition of the Gongfu Tea culture in Chaoshan Generation Z by refining the influencing factors in the research results, understand the sense of cultural identity of

Chinese youth and communication willingness of the local culture, so as to propose the inheritance path and communication strategy of the Gongfu Tea culture of Chaoshan Generation Z efficaciously.

Key Words

Cultural Inheritance; Embodied Perspective; Generation Z; Chaozhou Gongfu Tea;

GameIN: Proposing Methodological Disruptions in the Study of Inclusive Games

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Abstract

The paradigms for approaching disability have gradually evolved through four stages characterized by an exclusion - segregation - integration - inclusion path (Silva, 2009). The previously prevailing medical model of disability, which emphasizes the individuals' impairments as causing the disability, has been progressively replaced by a social model of disability, where it is seen as emerging from the environment's inability to accommodate the individual's support needs (Gilbert, 2019). The distinctive characteristics of games need to be considered in light of the new approach to disability. These characteristics include a wide range of potentialities such as interactivity, goal orientation, motivation through failure, or immediate feedback (Boyle et al., 2016). Considering this, games are nowadays seen as having a relevant potential to foster empowerment and inclusion with different underrepresented populations, even if some knowledge gaps and policy opportunities can still be identified (Stewart et al., 2013). Even though this potential is recognized, a significant gap seems to emerge. This is centered around the lack of representation of people with disability in gaming worlds, with research tending to see this subject through a utilitarian and categorical picture (Wästerfors & Hansson, 2017). As above explored, this includes the underrepresentation of these individuals' voices and desires (Sousa, 2020) in the use of research methodologies that contradict the premise of "nothing about us, without us" that originated the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006) and most activist movements in the field (Johnson et al., 2019).

This paper aims to present a methodological disruption in the field of Participatory Communication Research (PCR) that led to the creation of the GameIN action-research project. The proposed methodological approach discussed here is based on the approach of two fundamental lines to the study of games in communication research: emancipatory and participatory research. Emancipatory research is related to "the adoption of the social model of disability as the ontological and epistemological basis for research production", while empowering people with Intellectual Disability (pwID) in their self-emancipation processes (Watson, 2020, p. 130). In line

with these premises, participatory research emerged as closely linked to cognitive disabilities – such as intellectual disability – in order to challenge the passive role of the subjects in research and include them in its production. Other ways of naming this paradigm include inclusive research or co-production (Stranadová & Walmsley, 2018).

As a research approach, GameIN aims to explore the value of games to empower pwID and other related stakeholders (e. g. caregivers, advocacy associations, NGOs) in the promotion of inclusive and meaningful occupational activities, while contributing to more equalitarian media creation processes. This paper will present in detail the operationalization of the previously discussed pillars in the GameIN project, critically analyzing their potential impacts, which include contextual data on game-based, participatory and collaborative media creation processes as strategies to foster inclusion, empowerment, and equity. With this approach, we intend to foster discussion about the participation of underrepresented populations in media production, changing not only daily practices but, more systematically, the epistemological paradigms that underlie scientific research.

Key Words

games; inclusion; participation; participatory research; emancipatory research; media creation; empowerment.

The Symbolic Exchange and Hyper-performance: A Study on the social-mediated Emojis in the Chinese Online Subcultural Community

Authors

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Ms. Yuqian Yang - Communication University of China

Ms. Xinrong Bu - Communication University of China

Abstract

Background

With the deep mediatization of social communication, emojis have become the most hyper-active and commonest symbol of social-mediated communication among Chinese youngsters. The emojis own an alternative language system, which carries the symbolic communication of daily-experience by capturing and encoding all kinds of expressions and common objects, thereby form its own meaningful but obscure and flowing virtual world. In fact, emojis have evolved into an ambiguous and diverse code system, extending complex cultural landscapes on the social media and all other online platforms across the world.

This study uses the concept of cultural capital and Manuel Castells 's theories of space of flow and space of places and reinterprets them in digital communication and cultural field among Chinese youth. Pierre Bourdieu introduced the economic perspective and the concept of capital into culture study, and proposed the concept of cultural capital. Cultural capital is described as the actor's level of knowledge and cultural accomplishment and the degree to which they fit into with the orthodox

culture, which affects whether the actor can gain vantage ground in the field.

Castells argues that in the context of new economic society and global integration, a global flowing space is emerging, with the global cities as its nodes.

With the support of participatory culture, symbols are deconstructed from their original meaning or collaged with locally rooted, class-based resources. Thus, the new sub-cultural connotations are produced beyond the global Internet nodes. our research further focuses on the localized use of emoji.

Research Design

Based on the above views, this study adopts the methods of qualitative textual analysis and online ethnography to investigate the features of Chinese youth's emoji usage. This study observed a Tencent QQ group of about 1000 Chinese users, mainly consisting of Chinese youth who are

interested in Toho Project. Most of the group members belong to the deep subculture population, and the QQ group is relatively exclusive, with the feature of using slang frequently.

How are the ambiguous and flowing connotations of emoji, as the basic socially mediated communication symbol for members of sub-cultural groups, universally shared and exchanged? How do the members of this group build a unique network ecology through participatory communication? Why do emojis play the dual role of both cultural capital and emotional bond? Based on this, how does emoji deconstruct its original connotation, express views in a new form of cultural capital and expand the influence of members and set limits on the outsiders, meanwhile maintain the internal stability of the group? What kind of cultural temperament does the process show? These are the questions this article hopes to answer.

Findings

This study finds that the usage of emoji and the cultural capital possessed by Chinese youth shows the characteristic of localization. Within an internally bounded online community, emojis are objectified by collective memory and form knowledge, as well as ambiguous and flowing connotations. Their mastery and ability to interpret the meaning of emojis become a basic criterion for possessing cultural capital. Therefore a unique cultural community is constructed in the process of participatory communication. For those group members who perceive themselves as weak or rebellious, they actively deconstruct and collage symbols based on cultural memory and use them more aggressively in their daily communication, flaunting their cultural capital and trying to gain higher status. Finally, within this dynamically stable group, Chinese youth use the emojis to hunt for cultural capital and construct online space of places to communicate with others in common interest.

In conclusion, the rise of emoji usage among Chinese youth reflects the deconstruction and reconstruction of the original emoji system, which successfully breaks the dominant interpretation power of the original symbol producers, thus forming a negotiated decoding scheme. This digital cultural capital becomes an intangible capital for Chinese youth to socialize online, divide their interest groups and generate cultural identities, thus we can understand Chinese youth in the Internet sub-culture within the complicated interaction between the global and the local. Empowered by the temperament and aspirations of Generation Z, numerous Chinese young users, whether outside the visible nodes of the Internet or in hidden corners, have picked up the secret weapon of cultural pluralism only belonging to the weak, for fun, for interpretation, and for freedom, ignited the spark of revolt against the traditional discourse.

Key Words

emoji, semiotic, cultural capital, localization

TikTok and young people's "decontextualized" entertainment practices: Insights from a participatory ethnographic study in Spain

Authors

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Abstract

Young people participate in social networks, among which TikTok occupies a prominent place today, with the percentage of users in the world reaching 56% (Statista, 2022), and with a very young profile; the average age of users being between 11 and 24 years (Kolsquare, 2022). The latest studies (Bhandari & Bimo, 2022; Kaye et al., 2021; Han & Kuipers, 2021) essentially relate the fast expansion of TikTok to the nature of its algorithm. However, our knowledge about this new phenomenon is still limited. What does this platform mean to young people? And, more specifically, how do young people understand and "appropriate" its features, especially the algorithm embedded in the platform?

In this presentation, we will approach these questions, captured by an ongoing participatory ethnographic project, in which we work with 22 participants aged between 11 and 24 years old in Spain. We follow the participants' activities on TikTok and conduct interviews on a monthly basis for a year. As part of this, we have analyzed together with each participant a common set of popular TikTok videos as well as materials (videos and photos) brought by each of them that represent their relations to the platform. Employing the concept of affordances (Gibson, 1979) from a social constructivist view, we analyze how the uses, meaning, and culture are created, developed, and "flourished" by and among its users on TikTok, and how they are mediated by the constraints and enablers of the platform.

Our study documents the unique practices and value attached to TikTok by young users, different from other social media platforms, in particular, Instagram. On one hand, coinciding with other recent studies (e.g. Bhandari & Bimo, 2022), the platform is not seen as a place to "connect" with close others or follow certain users, but for "decontextualized" entertainment - by sharing their creations with a larger audience or by viewing videos created by unfamiliar users but of their interests. And, these are facilitated by and recognizing the algorithm embedded in the platform. What the study reveals, furthermore, is the different ways in which our young participants navigate and appropriate the features of TikTok for their interests. For some, the algorithm and the "relatability" (Kennedy, 2020) of TikTok, empowered them to create and share content with a wider public, whether they are essentially "derivative videos" (Darvin, 2022) or not, and finding ways to get and increase unfamiliar followers. Some others customize the feeding by following

many accounts, while others rely on the algorithmic feeding provided by the platform, but navigate it to make suit their interests.

Key Words

TikTok, social media, affordances, algorithm, ethnography, Spain.

Mediating self, change and identity through Interactive Games

Authors

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Abstract

The community media gives voice to the hitherto ignored community members and communities become their own change agents and communicate their problems and issues. The emphasis of the media is placed on results that go beyond individual behavior to widely recognized social needs. The study embraces the idea of conscientization in creating the practice focusing on participation, facilitation, and dialogue.

Games empower the players to become leaders, exploring different avenues regarding various perspectives, encountering the subject space in an unexpected way, making a stage and capacity of future learning and critical thinking. The game players are put in testing connections and face difficulties to tackle the issues. It likewise catches Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) of the players through these methods, which catches player's information and standards of conduct about issues.

The research question of the study is how community media has been practiced and mediated to design interactive non-digital games as a method to create a dialogue on youth and depression. The objective of the study is to design the non-digital games through active participation of the young girls for initiating dialogue on youth issues and study the process of development of the Non-digital games. The study also examines the role of community games on the co-creators who are actively involved in the development of games. The study begins by setting out its brief, and then proceeds to locate community co-innovators and develop interactive games.

The study phase embraces human centric design methods. Ethnographic action research methods employed to design the communication interventions. The study approach includes the inspiration, ideation and implementation phase focusing on observation, ideation, rapid prototyping, feedback, iteration and implementation. The study engaged the dialogue with the 'Community' of young girls whose voices are unheard. It investigates the settings for the creation of an empowering environment for community media by contemplating the issues that presently challenge the young girls in the community.

Around the world, depression is one of the main sources of sadness and illness among adolescents. Risk-bearing practices can be both a technique to adapt to poor psychological well-being and can seriously affect a teen's psychological and actual prosperity. Adolescent sadness flourishes in segregation and feeds on silence. The study highlights the role of participatory communication in mediating social change in community-based media interventions.

The study is based on 'Community of practice'. Community centric communication for social change plays an important role in the study using various forms of media approaches and training

methods based on liberating structures to create a dialogue between game developers (co-innovators) and users. Working with community exchanges and enhancing the concerns of the community about issues that worry their lives, community media is viewed as a powerful instrument that can add to the improvement of the community that they serve .

The study discovered community media as a media which empowers gatherings and people to go into public exchange, accordingly supporting cooperation in dynamic cycles and underwriting a more prominent feeling of the individual in directing the local area's turn of development and change. It was observed during the different phases of the study, where the co-innovators were supporting each ,exchanging their ideas and views and dialoguing a change in the community through their practice and voice.The approaches used in the development of non-digital interactive games offered a great exposure to the co-innovators and also helped the researcher to bridge the gap between the co-innovators. The methods allowed the researcher to experiment with the creativity and confidence of the co-innovators. Facilitation explores imagination and the process of empowerment whereas participation is an outcome of the success of the facilitation.

The major findings of the study include game designing and playing proved as an intimate process to share, understand and gain confidence among young girls dealing with depression. As co-innovators, converting their every experience and inner self in designing games help them understand their strengths and weaknesses. Games embodied as a community medium providing the player with interpersonal interactions and emotional responses.

Key Words

Community media, Interactive games, Youth, Depression, Change,Identity

RELATOS Y VIVENCIAS SOBRE LA CONFORMACIÓN URBANA DE COMUNIDADES AUTOORGANIZADAS: DOS ESTUDIOS DE CASO

Authors

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Abstract

Partiendo del reto que implica retos de política pública a nivel nacional y local, para comprender las dinámicas de generación de ingresos, los efectos en el costo y la calidad de vida y el papel de las instituciones en estos territorios, enfrentados por los gobiernos con la promoción de programas de desmarginalización y mejoramiento integral de los barrios, se realiza el proyecto Ciudades colombianas como escenarios para la Inclusión Social.

Desde el cuestionamiento sobre ¿cómo se puede, a través del conocimiento de las dinámicas urbanas, proponer mecanismos de inclusión social que faciliten la transformación hacia ciudades amables para todos?, con énfasis en estudiar el efecto de las lógicas y los factores que influyen las decisiones de los actores, en relación con las políticas públicas y las dimensiones del desplazamiento, en la persistencia y magnitud de los AUI.

El punto de encuentro entre la comunicación y los estudios urbanos es la Teoría del Juego Social de Carlos Matus (2021), para acercarse y comprender los contextos de los habitantes de los AUI, así como los intereses y necesidades individuales que les llevan a tomar la decisión de vivir en este contexto. Comprendiendo la necesidad de realizar un análisis situacional, enfoque utilizado en los diagnósticos de comunicación participativa.

Los resultados obtenidos en cada uno de los barrios estudiados en Soacha y Villavicencio, se dan a partir del análisis de entrevistas, así como de los registros obtenidos en desarrollo del juego Metamorfosis Construyendo mi Barrio[1]. Presentados desde dimensiones analíticas como:

La problematización de la categoría informalidad, para mostrar cómo lo que aparece es un MODO autoorganizado de poblamiento, gestión y desarrollo del territorio para vivir, para producir y construir un patrimonio.

El análisis en profundidad de la perspectiva del actor, donde exploraremos a partir de sus relatos, la forma en que los actores se perciben a sí mismos y las características que les permiten la construcción de sentido compartido.

Descripción de los elementos culturales, políticos, relacionales, comunicativos que crean un territorio propio (Uranga, Prieto, Rodriguez) por lo que se hace necesario mostrar que los barrios llamados de conformación “informal”, presentan territorialidades con estructuras propias, constituidas por lógicas que se sedimentan a través de elementos singulares.

Finalmente se muestra el análisis de las soluciones planteadas por los actores en el juego desde la eficiencia de la acción, la aceptabilidad de las soluciones, el rol que cumple la comunicación en los procesos de negociación y la forma que adquiere la coproducción como principal mecanismo para enfrentar situaciones problemáticas en estas comunidades autoorganizadas.

Resultados que reconocen el poder del tejido relacional en la participación pública, base para el cambio social y la construcción de nuevas formas de habitar la ciudad, que tanto los gobiernos como los círculos académicos, pueden abordar para acercarse y entender la informalidad como una forma de vida y construcción de la ciudad, así como los procesos propios de gobernanza y mecanismos que los caracterizan como comunidades autoorganizadas.

[1] Juego de mesa diseñado como herramienta metodológica por parte del equipo de investigadores.

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Key Words

Comunicación, estudios urbanos, comunidades autoorganizadas, juego social, asentamientos urbanos informales.

Discord como plataforma periodística para el diálogo directo con las audiencias

Authors

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Dr. Nadia Alonso-López - Universidad Politécnica de Valencia

Dr. José María Herranz de la Casa - Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha

Abstract

Hoy en día los usuarios reclaman mayor protagonismo a través de diversos canales digitales. La plataformización ha empoderado a las audiencias haciéndolas más participativas. Una participación no solo en el diálogo directo con los emisores de diversa índole, sino también en la producción de contenidos. En este contexto, Discord se ha ido consolidando como un espacio donde ese diálogo activo y digital es el eje principal. Pensada inicialmente como apoyo a la 'comunidad gamer' (sobre todo por su fácil integración con otros canales como Twitch), hoy en día ha visto cómo otros actores irrumpen en ella con el fin de acercarse a esta. Nuevos segmentos emergentes o alternativos están accediendo a ella, más allá de sus públicos objetivo. Así, hoy es posible ver cómo desde la educación, la comunicación corporativa o el periodismo, por ejemplo, acuden a este recurso con nuevas motivaciones.

La presente investigación tiene como objetivo analizar si la plataforma constituye específicamente una vía para reforzar el trabajo de medios y periodistas y aproximarlos a los usuarios. Además, también analiza qué elementos resultan novedosos en comparación con otras plataformas. Asimismo, se plantea los elementos narrativos en la conversación y las características principales que deben tener periodistas y medios para intervenir en esta plataforma. Por último, se profundiza en posibles fórmulas específicas de la plataforma para motivar la conversación con las audiencias.

Key Words

Discord, Periodismo, Audiencias participativas, Narrativas emergentes, Comunicación digital, Plataformización

Analysis of Factors Influencing Distance Perception in VR Live Streaming

Authors

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Abstract

Virtual reality technology is significantly altering conventional forms of content and changing the relationship between "technology and body". This study aims to investigate users' perception of physical distance in the virtual reality live-streaming environment and identify the factors that influence this perception. The findings of this study can inform the development of live-streaming platforms that enhance the user experience.

To achieve this goal, a semi-structured interview method was used to collect data from 15 participants, comprising of 8 males and 8 females with ages ranging from 19 to 55 and diverse occupations. The interviews were conducted through face-to-face or network voice chat, and some participants participated in multiple interviews. The latest VR equipment, PICO 4, was used in this study, as the device's advanced features and capabilities ensure the authenticity of the virtual environment.

The results of the study indicate that 5 main factors impact users' perception of physical distance in VR live-streaming: anchor output, user participation, scene layout, lens sound painting, and media technology. Anchor output and interactive ability have a significant effect on users' body-perceived distance, while the degree of VR media use and degree of identification and interaction with the host determine the accuracy of body distance judgment. VR media technology provides an embodied attribute that enables the anchor to close the physical distance with the viewer quickly through interaction, but double shadows may occur with zero distance, causing the viewer to feel withdrawn. A chaotic scene layout can improve the accuracy of body perception distance judgment, and lens language is a crucial factor affecting perceived body distance in VR live-streaming.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of understanding users' body distance perception in VR live-streaming and the factors that influence it. The findings provide empirical evidence to support the research in the academic field that explores the relationship between technology and the human body in virtual reality. Further studies are necessary to investigate the impact of virtual bodies on users' body distance perception in VR live-streaming and contribute to the evolving understanding of VR anchors, body communication, media distance, and media. These findings can inform the design and functionality of VR live-streaming platforms, enabling a more immersive and engaging user experience.

Key Words

Influencing Factors, Distance Perception, VR Live Streaming

Philosophy of Technology Empirical Analysis and Ethical Reflection on “Online Self-study”

Authors

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Dr. Tian Zhao - Television School, Communication University of China

Abstract

Albert Borgmann once asserted on the relationship between modern technology and people: “Technology is not a simple means, but has become an environment and a way of life. This is the substantive impact of technology”. During the Covid-19 epidemic, when the physical social space was drastically compressed, the practice of “online self-study” using online chat, time management and other platforms to supervise each other sparked an upsurge, reconstructing people’s digital living style. Nevertheless, it’s easy to cause excessive reliance on technical equipment so that people would reduce learning efficiency, and excessively immerse in the “Cloud” social space leading to the loss of the ability to grasp the real space. Therefore, it is necessary for the academic community to conduct rational reflection on the essence of technological application and ethical standards behind the upsurge of “online self-study”.

The empirical transformation of philosophy of technology advocates philosophical reflection should be based on complex and rich experience descriptions of technology, and philosophy of technology must examine technology itself, people and society at the same time. Therefore, this paper uses the methods of network ethnography and interviews to empirically analyze the phenomenon of “online self-study” with the concepts which are “focal thing” “device paradigm” and “focal practice” in Borgmann’s phenomenological philosophy of technology. It tries to explore: What kind of technical essence does the “online self-study” platform embody? What is the relationship between the Internet platform that “online self-study” relies on and the human as well as the world? How should we examine the phenomenon of “online self-study” and reconstruct the practice under the fusion of new media technology and autonomous learning?

Firstly, this paper analyzes the transformation process of the “online self-study” platform as a technical device from “thing” to “device” to see its technical essence. On the one hand, based on Borgmann’s definition of the three information forms, it analyzes the essence of information form changes, “online self-study” makes up for the reality of self-study practice, and technical information provides the possibility of reality reproduction, but also shakes the foundation of previous cultural information. On the other hand, this paper analyzes the technical essence represented by the Internet platform from the perspective of technical artifacts. The human uses the platform to enrich life instead of participating in reality, and self-study is no longer focused on a specific place, forming an “device paradigm”. From a static point of view, The human’s attention is focused on the technological operation of the “online self-study” platform. “Convenient consumption” makes the human’s studying practice far away from the original meaning and value,

and the desire for technology has become the essence of practice. From a dynamic point of view, the physical practice of the human using physical power and mental power is replaced by the simulated world constructed by technology, and the practice of “absence” and “discontinuity” dominates, which obviously does not conform to the basic logic of studying activities.

Secondly, this paper reflects on the technological illusion brought about by “online self-study” from the perspective of Borgmann’s device paradigm: the “thing” that gather and reflect the natural world are replaced by technology, thus obscuring people’s experience of the real world. The emotional and social atmosphere will also be challenged. While expanding the virtual studying space, “online self-study” also destroys the actual participation of the human and the sense of ritual of cultural activities. The meaning of the studying activity itself is weakened, and the connection between the human and the real world is severed.

Finally, on the basis of experiential interpretation and analysis, this paper returns to the “facing the thing itself” emphasized by phenomenology, and conducts ethical reflection and practical guidance on the practice under the balance of new media technology and autonomous learning. Since the actual conditions force us to use technological devices, guarding the “focal thing” and carrying out “focal practice” will enable us to avoid the technological dystopia. It seems to be an effective method to form a convention similar to the management regulations of libraries and self-study rooms within the “online self-study” organization, assign roles such as managers, and use collective basic material decisions to shape individual basic material decisions. In addition, restoring the scene as much as possible and combining online and offline to construct a rich reality can also further stimulate the human’s sense of community, thereby challenging technology through focal practice based on emotion and social contracts, so as to protect the integrity and depth of our life.

Key Words

Technological Philosophy, Online self-study, Focal thing, Device paradigm, Albert Borgmann

Tiers-lieux culturels et participation : nouvelle utopie de l'action publique territoriale ? Étude de cas de trois tiers-lieux culturels luxembourgeois.

Authors

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Dr. Pascal Quidu - Centre Norbert Elias, Avignon Université

Abstract

A partir de l'étude de cas de trois tiers-lieux culturels luxembourgeois ayant vu le jour dans le cadre de l'année Capitale Européenne de la Culture ESCH22, cette proposition a pour objectif d'interroger le tiers-lieu culturel comme idéal-type de la participation dans le sens où cette catégorie de lieu dit "intermédiaire" est mobilisée par les acteurs comme nouvelle utopie de l'action publique territoriale ayant pour mission de ré-enchanter les politiques culturelles. Pour ce panel, nous présenterons les résultats d'une recherche en cours conduite de manière qualitative (entretiens semi-directifs et observations ethnographiques) pour tenter de rendre compte de la manière, d'une part, dont la participation est mobilisée dans les discours des acteurs sociaux, d'autre part, dont les pratiques de la participation sont mise en actes et les modalités d'engagement des publics sont déployées.

Face au poids normatif de l'appel à la participation institué par la législation, les différents labels culturels (Capitale Française de la culture, Capitale européenne de la culture, Agenda 21 de la culture, etc.), les appels à projets (nationaux et internationaux) ou les dispositifs numériques, les questions suivantes méritent d'être posées : Quelle est la place donnée à la participation dans les tiers-lieux culturels ? Comment la question de la participation est-elle mise en discours par les acteurs politiques et culturels des tiers-lieux ? Quelles sont les formes de participation mises en œuvre par les acteurs-porteurs de projets Tiers-lieux ? Comment rendre compte, par l'enquête de terrain, de ces différentes formes d'expérience et de ses modalités d'appropriation par les publics participants ?

Cette série de questions traverse le programme de recherche partenarial et collaboratif que notre équipe de chercheurs du Centre Norbert Elias (UMR 8562) et du Laboratoire Culture et Communication mène auprès de trois tiers-lieux culturels luxembourgeois s'inscrivant dans la programmation de la Capitale Européenne de la Culture, ESCH 2022. Dans le cadre de cette communication, nous présenterons ces organisations et la manière dont nous avons opéré sur le terrain pour observer les pratiques en actes, en matière de participation. La notion de participation sera discutée dans ses usages sociaux et culturels afin d'adopter un regard critique vis-à-vis de ce « marché de la participation » dans le domaine des arts et de la culture dont les incitations voire injonctions « sont plus pressantes que les demandes de participation » des citoyens ordinaires ». Les principaux résultats de cette recherche au long cours seront présentés et permettront d'interroger la tension entre « participation » et « tiers-lieux culturels ». Nous tenterons ainsi de

construire un point de vue communicationnel et sociologique sur le tiers-lieu culturel comme idéal-type de la participation.

Key Words

participation, démocratie, tiers lieux culturels, publics, Luxembourg

Urban Data? Block Sidewalk Resistance to Smart City AI Exploitation in Toronto

Authors

Prof. Sandra Jeppesen - Lakehead University Orillia

Abstract

Mass surveillance is a complex, ideological issue in smart city projects, fraught with contradictions and tensions. Whose data will be collected, who is put under dataveillance, who will own the data, who will be marginalized or even criminalized, and who will benefit from this surveillance? These questions and many more became a point of contention in the development of the Toronto Sidewalk Labs smart city proposal. In 2017, Toronto put out a call for proposals to develop a small piece of land in a post-industrial waterfront area in the east end of the city called Quayside. Sidewalk Labs, a subsidiary of Google, won the bid and started developing a smart city proposal that would profit from condo development, data extraction, service provision, restaurants, and other lifestyle offerings. They wanted the City of Toronto to give them free reign, particularly over data exploitation, and to this end, they invented the term “urban data,” an amorphous but comprehensive descriptor which they aimed to exclude from Canadian personal data protection and privacy laws. This legally ambiguous term was meant to account for all forms of geospatial urban data, including ubiquitous data collection points embedded in the newly-built urban architecture, as well as data collected from citizen smartphone use in urban spaces, which they defined as everywhere outside live and work spaces. Data exploitation and monetization of these kinds of technological efficiencies were Sidewalk’s priorities. Citizens living in or visiting the area could opt out of the ubiquitous dataveillance, but at the cost of becoming invisible in the Quayside area, unable to access services such as waste removal, transportation, restaurants, or food delivery, and vulnerable to being hit by self-driving cars. A citizen group called Block Sidewalk formed to contest the smart city paradigm proposed by Sidewalk Labs, and proposed in its place the development of smart, sustainable, ecological cities from the grassroots with citizens’ rights and needs foregrounded. This presentation examines the discourses and demands of the Block Sidewalk movement—which ultimately defeated Sidewalk Labs in Toronto, partially due to their success in contesting Sidewalk’s proposed all-encompassing and hugely profitable data ownership paradigm. The case study interrogates the development of collective citizen intelligence to contest the proposed datafication, dataveillance, data extraction, and data exploitation of the smart city blueprint, probing contradictions inherent in the collection of citizen data *a priori*, and exploring tensions within a politics of demand for citizen data to be owned and controlled by citizens. It questions how citizen groups in smart cities might address data divides so that smart cities—and the AI that supports them—are not amplifying existing social inequalities, but rather supporting intersectional liberation for all citizens who inhabit and traverse the urban space.

Key Words

Surveillance, smart city, urban data, Sidewalk labs, Toronto

Therapy Tech in Surveillant Smart Cities

Authors

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Abstract

“Therapy tech” is the latest “smart” technology for mental health, with over twenty thousand free or low-cost apps claiming to improve user mental health, such as Talkspace, Headspace, Sanvello, MoodKit, Calm, WoeBot, and Happify. However, the use of these apps is accompanied by a lack of critical information regarding outcomes provided to users, an absence of any scientific evidence of their efficacy, and the inability of regulatory frameworks to address citizen concerns. Nonetheless, these apps promise to produce intended outcomes of improved mental health for users through methods such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, meditation, breathing exercises, and so on. These methods have proven effective in in-person therapy, but the apps that use them have not consistently produced reliable outcomes in scientific studies. Moreover, these new therapy technology apps are presented as innovations that will improve the user's living experience, allowing them the freedom to take responsibility for their own mental health support, in a sense, downloading the social responsibility of societies for the health of their citizens onto the citizens themselves in a neoliberal model of responsabilization, alienation, and atomization. Users are encouraged to engage in affective labour, expressing deep-felt emotions with nobody there to respond if they are triggered or have a mental health crisis that requires an intervention. Instead the app requires them to “participate in new types of surveillance, and adopt entrepreneurial attitudes toward their own mental healthiness” (Hilland 3) by themselves, with their affective labour generating data that is monetized by the apps, thus doubly exploiting the users. Therapy tech consequently both reflects and constructs the neoliberal value combining capitalist exploitation with individual responsibility, isolating ‘patients’ with their smartphone digital connection, whereas those seeking therapy typically require and are seeking human connection to a therapist, and might better benefit from social support, friends, family, and an overall culture of collective care. This paper problematizes the ingrained neoliberal subjectivity at the foundation of the architectural design of this kind of technological support platform for citizens of smart cities, which produces unintended mental health crises in the urban landscape, with serious implications and consequences, including increasing suicides and urban violence. Further, it explores how communities are fighting back against “smart” surveillant AI technologies. Contesting top-down neoliberal capitalist therapy tech, communities are building care collectives through community-based organizing that engages with new forms of technologies from the grassroots.

Key Words

Therapy tech, smart city, AI, affective labour, care collectives

The echo chamber of patriotism: how teenagers are impacted by participating in patriotic videos watching on Danmaku platforms -- a structural equation modeling-based analysis

Authors

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Ms. Di Wu - Beijing Normal University

Abstract

INTRODUCTION

Instead of the typical comment section that appears below the videos, Danmaku is a form of interactive comment that can be seen just above the video content. When watching internet videos about national issues, young users in China nowadays are eager to express their patriotic fervor by sharing danmaku, which leads to the unusual phenomenon of "danmaku protecting the motherland."

Teenagers watch videos online, actively share danmaku, and are infected by the patriotic zeal from the videos, unlike the traditional unidirectional patriotism propaganda in China. They then seek out similar emotional experiences and identification by watching similar videos. An "echo chamber of patriotism" may be formed when the platform algorithm recognizes this behavior and suggests comparable content to teenagers. Youth in mono-national countries may benefit from this by developing a stronger sense of national identity, but there are risks involved, including the development of rigid viewpoints, hostility toward other nations, and even extreme nationalism.

Therefore, the main topic of this essay is whether watching videos about national issues on danmaku platforms results in an echo chamber effect of patriotism. How can we use emerging technology to better support teenage users' political engagement?

METHOD

We held a questionnaire survey.

Based on earlier research, we designed our questionnaire. The main variables we used to measure the media use behavior of adolescent users were: engagement in danmaku watching, engagement in danmaku interaction, active extended watching behavior, and danmaku watching initiative. The variables we used to measure the strength of patriotism beliefs of adolescent users included: national identity, symbolic patriotism, constructive patriotism, and uncritical patriotism. We refer to Cristian Vaccari (2016) for a measure of homogeneous exposure to patriotic opinions in social media political opinion exposure studies, where the more homogeneous the nature of the danmaku opinions users are exposed to, the more deeply users are involved in the patriotic echo chamber.

The questionnaire's overall Cronbach's alpha was 0.857, which indicates good reliability. The questionnaire can be regarded as having good face validity because all the questions were created using references from recognized studies. Additionally, the questionnaire's factor analysis revealed that its structural validity was strong. We gathered 573 valid samples and analyzed them by structural equation modeling.

RESULTS & CONCLUSION

The results indicate that danmaku homogeneity showed a highly significant positive effect on the strength of patriotic beliefs ($p < 0.01$), i.e., users exposed to homogeneous danmaku had higher patriotic beliefs. This result suggests that the echo chamber of patriotism does exist.

The strength of young users' patriotic beliefs is significantly influenced by two variables, danmaku watching and danmaku interactive participation ($p < 0.01$), with danmaku watching participation having a positive effect and danmaku interactive participation having a negative effect.

This study provides theoretical support for the existence of patriotic echo chambers, a finding that has consequences for the echo chamber hypothesis, patriotic propaganda, and youth political participation online at a time when participatory communication is emerging as the primary form of communication. This paper argues that enriching video issues and political dialogue on danmaku platforms is the best way to confront patriotic echo chambers.

Key Words

Danmaku, Echo chamber, Internet patriotism, Participatory communication, Structural equation model

Fostering a decolonial approach to Paralympic broadcasting and engagement: Communication for localization

Authors

Dr. Jessica Noske-Turner - Loughborough University

Dr. Emma Pullen - Loughborough University

Prof. Mufunanji Magalasi - University of Malawi

Abstract

The Paralympics is a global, mediated sporting event that has always been underpinned by a range of social change motivations. The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) claims that the Paralympics is now “the world’s number one sport event for driving social inclusion,” and that it “boasts a strong track record for transforming attitudes, cities, countries, and the lives of millions of people around the world.” (IPC, 2022). In 2021, the Tokyo Paralympic Games was broadcast across Free to Air (FTA) television across 49 territories in Sub-Saharan Africa. This historic moment in the global development of Paralympic broadcasting provides for an important scholarly intervention that can extend understandings of Paralympic production beyond the Global North context.

In all but one of the 49 territories, the broadcast arrangements were such that a French production company (TV Media Sport, TVMS) was contracted to produce daily highlights packages and distribute these to national broadcasters to be aired on their channels. The 50-minute daily highlights packages included commentary in English, French, Portuguese or Spanish. The exception to this was in Malawi, which was the site of our participatory action research.

Drawing on an integrated dataset, including interviews with the IPC (responsible for negotiating Paralympic broadcast rights), TVMS (responsible for content production and distribution), and one national Sub-Saharan Broadcaster (Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), as well as audience research and ongoing participatory action research, this paper critically engages with the experience of the broadcast and associated community engagement from a range of perspectives.

Our research confirms the social change potential of the Paralympics, but we also identify structures and processes that could be highly problematic. This paper reveals that the development and distribution of the broadcast package in 2021 was underpinned by epistemic, ontological and practical failures replete with neocolonial sentiments and (mis-)understandings of the geopolitical contours and disability politics of the Sub-Saharan African region.

Using Lie’s (2003) concept of ‘communication for localization’, we highlight four ‘acts’ of localization and interpretation that are important for efforts towards ‘de-colonising’ and ‘localising’ the Paralympic package in ways that may capture the national audiences’ sporting imaginations and (re-)position understandings of disability and Paralympic sport at the intersection of the cultural and political, personal and public, local and global. These localization acts rest on

principles of participatory communication, dialogue, and an ecological approach to communication. We propose alternative broadcast and community engagement models that may support sustainable Paralympic broadcasting as a platform for a more progressive dialogue on disability politics, activism, and social change.

Key Words

Paralympics; communication for social change; disability; sport; decolonization

“I did not know my neighbour”: Chile’s cabildos as communicative realms

Authors

Dr. Jorge Saavedra - Universidad Diego Portales

Abstract

The literature on mobilization and social movements has an important focus on the urban realm. It is precisely in the open air, in public spaces, where large gatherings show their massiveness and play the power to have a voice in front of a usually closed political sphere from which they are excluded. The literature on media and communications has paid attention to these large meetings and rallies (Barassi, 2015; Castells, 2012). Contentious waves marching on iconic avenues or protesters occupying main squares have caught the eye of scholars asking for their performative and representational features. The latter is reasonable within the tradition of social movements theory (Tilly & Wood, 2009)

However, urban spaces in Latin America have also been occupied on a smaller scale and with people not usually engaged in activism, creating local instances for dialogue, participation, and democracy, like in Argentina and Ecuador *asambleas de barrio* at the dawn of this century (Argento, 2015). That is precisely the place where this presentation locates its interest. In October 2019, Chile lived the most massive mobilization since the return to democracy (Somma, 2021). What started as a protest against the rise of ticket fares in the metro system in Santiago soon spread all over the country as a revolt against neoliberalism. President Piñera called up the Army and declared a curfew that people contested in several ways. One of the ways was through local improvised instances of direct participation: local *cabildos* -

small-scale territorial assemblies.

People from all over the country organized meetings in their local neighbourhoods. Via social media, WhatsApp, word of mouth, and posters in local markets or grocery stores, people grabbed chairs and took them to the streets, to a little square, or asked a close-range school to open their rooms for the people to talk and discuss the ongoing events, write their local needs, claims, and dreams. That simple but improbable action in standard times took place in several cities quickly and spontaneously.

In a supposedly hyper-connected work, why and how this particular citizen-led democratic experience took place (Ureta, 2021)? Drawing on interviews with neighbours of three different regions in Chile, this presentation will provide an answer for the occurrence and implications of such instances. Based on testimonies praising *cabildos* for allowing people to socialize face to face - “as I did not my neighbours”, a Valparaíso citizen said - to others targeting its boundaries for participation, the presentation will contribute to the studies of participation and communication in three ways. It will locate the urban realm as a social media; evaluate the richness, shortcomings, and potentials of face-to-face interaction; and provide the shape and contours of conversation and

proximity on its performative, emotional, and communicational aspects in mobilization and democratization processes.

Key Words

Chile, assembly, cabildo, grassroots, local, communication, movement, protest, urban

#niunamenos: make-up performances, feminist activism and algorithmic resistance on TikTok

Authors

Prof. Laura Cervi - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Abstract

Activists and feminist activists have long been using social media as a tool for activism.

Ni una menos, the grassroots feminist movement, which emerged from the Argentinian campaigns against gender-based violence, has spread both across several Latin American countries and worldwide, growing into "an alliance of feminist forces", under the use of the hashtag #NiUnaMenos on social media.

The study, grounded on social movement and feminist literature, adopts an affordance-based approach. Acknowledging that each platform provides unique socio-technological affordances that shape both users' communicative practices and the platform's global techno-cultural environment, this study focuses on how *Ni una menos* has evolved on TikTok, examining the #niunamenos.

Applying multimodal content analysis to 500 videos collected under this hashtag, we unfold that creators perform gender by constructing performances in which music and other technological affordances are mixed with the use of their faces and bodies as canvases for the creation of an affective politically fueled narrative.

Driven by the platform's culture of imitation, this performative activism enables the participation of ordinary users, making democratic participation more relatable, tangible, and accessible to various audiences.

In addition, capitalizing on the platform's algorithmic visibility dynamic, creators/activists engender an innovative form of "algorithmic resistance" which allows them to circumvent the platform's censorship.

This study concludes that feminist activists in the Global South appropriate technology and promote innovative uses that not only respond to their local needs but also contribute to the production of global alternative imaginaries.

Key Words

niunamenos; TikTok; performance; performative activism; feminism; activism

Participatory future of local media

Authors

Dr. Alexander Gatilin - Lomonosov Moscow State University

Abstract

Digitalization, decline in print media revenues, combined with the desire of representatives of local authorities to directly inform citizens through official websites and pages on social networks, raise questions about the future of Russian local print media.

Researchers of the Faculty of Journalism of Lomonosov Moscow State University conducted a survey of editors and journalists of local media (29 media from 22 regions of Russia), based on a SWOT analysis, which made it possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses of local media, external opportunities and threats.

Internal weaknesses and external threats were attributed to low qualifications of employees, unattractive wages, competition with new media, and the reputation of media close and loyal to the authorities. Claims to the Russian Post-service, a statement of the "extinction of the hinterland" and a decrease in the consumer ability of the citizens are traditional. However, the greatest concern is the dependence on the founders. According to Natalia Goryainova, editor-in-chief of the Pervyi nomer newspaper (Lipetsk), "not giving the local media the opportunity to raise at least some debatable topic, the local authorities discredit themselves more than if criticism were heard on the pages of the newspapers ... The local authorities use us as PR -Agency to create a portfolio of a particular official. Moscow needs us to report on how well local officials are doing."

The close relationship with the audience was named as a strength of local media - journalists live in the same conditions as readers, know the problems firsthand, understand the peculiarities of relations within the community and enjoy the trust of citizens, which allows them to jointly solve social problems. The reliability of the information disseminated by local media and its connection to the area was also noted. External opportunities included the possibility of attracting a wide range of informants and local experts and the lack of competition from traditional media at the municipal level. One of the key functions of the local media, according to Evelina Rozman, deputy editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Zherdevsky news" (Tambov region), is the consolidation of the district community in resolving issues related to the improvement of the territory, the education of patriots and law-abiding citizens.

Based on the results of the pilot survey, as well as on the basis of previous research initiatives, it can be argued that the object of interest of scientists and responsible officials should be a multifaceted journalistic activity, which includes not only the release of print media, but also work in social networks, on the website, organization of social projects. The key performance indicators of local media editorial offices should not be the citation of local officials, but the involvement of the audience, the interest of local residents in the work of journalists, the level of trust in journalists and, as a result, increasing the effectiveness of interaction between government

officials and citizens, as well as improving the practices of civil dialogue and development of civic competences of readers.

Key Words

participatory journalism, local media

Communication policies' activist participation in Portugal: limitations and inconsequences

Authors

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Prof. Fábio Ribeiro - University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro; Communication and Society Research Centre (CECS)

Abstract

The present research intends to understand how citizen participation contributes to influence communication policies in Portugal, intending to identify how does individual or organized collective bottom up activism mobilize (or not) in order to participate in the design and implementation of communication policies and what issues spark attention and motivate action.

Although euphoric speeches on the revolutionary potential of technology frequently suggest that the mobilization towards the digital enables ideal conditions for a greater expression of citizenship in the public space, technical democratization coexists with many of the spheres through which the daily activity of society circulates, from electronic tax obligations to the consumption of information and entertainment, resulting in a complex equation.

In this study we seek to focus the reflection on one of the areas of (alleged) social mobilisation that crosses the active role of citizens and organisations in the public space and the media, especially in an attempt to understand whether there is a significant behaviour of interference in the daily life of the media, both from the point of view of the legal possibilities intended for that purpose, and of other situations that derive from cases where the social clamour against some specific sphere of the media was questioned, at least, with some visibility.

In this study we seek to focus the reflection on one of the areas of (alleged) social mobilisation that crosses the active role of citizens and organisations in the public space and the media, especially in an attempt to understand whether there is a significant behaviour of interference in the daily life of the media, both from the point of view of the legal possibilities intended for that purpose, and of other situations that derive from cases where the social clamour against some specific sphere of the media was questioned, at least, with some visibility.

Focused on the last decade (2012-2022) two lines of research were set with specific objectives: 1) mapping citizen legislative initiatives in the scope of parliamentary activity (petitions, legislation and referenda) and 2) identifying activist movements or argumentative discussions in the public space, through manifestations in the media, namely through news in the main search engines.

The collected evidence, indicates that, apparently, the culture of bottom-up activism related to communication policies presents weaknesses: being virtually absent from the institutional parliamentary possibilities and with inconsequent participation in and through the media, deriving

from an evident disorganization of the social structures that seek to mark an active voice in the media; only some sporadic episodes mainly related with television manage to raise some social mobilization, nevertheless quickly fading the initial glow of contestation. This work suggests, therefore, that future research should continue to map this terrain, eventually developing a systematic follow up of these dynamics.

Key Words

bottom-up; participation; communication policies; media; law.

The contingent role of gender and education in the moral foundations of online political participation: A non-Western perspective

Authors

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Abstract

Numerous studies have focused on the role of political ideology in examining offline and online political participation (Rogowski et al., 2014). The results suggest that ideology drives mass political behavior. Moreover, liberals are found more likely to engage in political action as they do not shy away from any confrontations (Arbache, 2014). While the literature on the role of ideology is well established and continues to expand, it suffers from a thin-centred Western definition that does not work well in other contexts, such as Confucian states (Beattie et al., 2022). Therefore, this study aims to break away from the liberal-conservative ideological spectrum and utilize the moral foundations theory to examine citizens' political engagement in Singapore.

More specifically, we explore how progressivism, the degree to which citizens endorse individualizing (fairness/reciprocity and harm/care) over the binding moral foundations (purity/sanctity, authority/respect, and in-group/loyalty) is associated with online political participation (RQ1). Given that previous studies have found gender differences in both how morals are perceived and political engagement, we also examine if the effects of progressivism on online political participation are contingent upon gender (RQ2). Finally, given that any form of political participation involves cognitive components, it is necessary to examine the role played by education. Therefore, we propose a moderated moderation model where we explore how education shapes the conditional relationship between progressivism and gender on online political participation (RQ3).

We employed Qualtrics, a reputed survey agency in social science research, to recruit the participants for this survey ($N = 435$). We employed a quota-based strategy to match the sample characteristics to population parameters focusing on age and gender quotas. This approach increases the generalizability of the results. First, we ran an OLS regression model to examine the direct effect of progressivism on online political participation (RQ1). Next, we used PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2018) to run the moderated (RQ2) and moderated moderation models (RQ3).

The findings suggest that progressivism is negatively associated with online political participation ($b = -.41$, $se = .08$, $p < .001$). As such, those who value binding over individualizing moral foundations are less likely to engage in online political participation. We also observed that an increase in progressivism is associated with greater political disengagement among males ($b = -.55$, $se = .12$, $p < .001$) than females ($b = -.26$, $se = .10$, $p < .001$). Education was found to influence

online political participation conditionally. The political disengagement at higher levels of progressivism for males and females only happens at higher levels of education (i.e., at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree levels).

Our analyses highlight that we can utilize the moral foundations framework to explore political engagement in societies that are characteristically different from advanced Western democracies. We also find that greater disengagement happens among males and those with higher education. These results are contrary to the typical findings based on Western democracies. Overall, the results highlight the need to include the socio-political and cultural characteristics within analytical frameworks examining online political engagement in Confucian societies.

Key Words

civic participation

political participation

gender effects

education effects

moral foundations

Identifying the drivers and barriers for youth e-participation in political decision-making in Finland

Authors

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Abstract

During the last few decades, ICT development has enabled young people to participate more actively in political decision-making than ever before. Recent studies have revealed that young people are increasingly using mainstream social media sites for civic and political engagement (Cho et al., 2020). Several scholars (e.g., Jenkins, 2006) have viewed the emergence of social media platforms with optimism, hoping that these platforms will provide citizens with new ways to express themselves and participate, thereby positively influencing political decision-making. Recent academic discussions are more critical, claiming that initial expectations about platforms as networked spaces for democratic participation were overestimated and highlighting risks related to datafication and commodification (e.g., Van Dijck, 2018). An alternative solution is to develop purpose-built online platforms, like the Virtual Council Digiraati (<https://digiraati.fi/>) in Finland, that offer youth the opportunity to express their political views and connect with peers and government representatives to exchange ideas. Even though digital services supporting youth e-participation exist or are being developed, they seem to face challenges in attracting a broad range of young participants (Pietilä et al., 2021).

With the aim to identify potential drivers and barriers to youth e-participation in political decision-making in Finland, we conducted a case study focusing on the decision-makers perspective. Our study is a part of the multidisciplinary project ALL-YOUTH (<https://www.allyouthstn.fi/>) which aims to find new avenues for youth involvement to ensure the sustainability of society. In order to collect empirical data for the study, qualitative in-depth interviews with officials from eight different Finland's ministries were conducted between June 2022 and January 2023. We selected participants who had experience working with youth in their ministry's decision-making processes. A snowball recruitment method was used when previous participants suggested interviewing colleagues with experience in youth participation from other ministries.

Two main research questions guided our study. At first, we were inquiring **what officials' perceptions of e-participation are**. As the term "e-participation" does not have a universally recognized definition (Weiss, 2020), at our starting point, we relied on Sanford & Rose (2007), who see e-participation as contributing to shared activity that is connected to decision-making and is executed through ICT. Using the data collected in our study, our aim is further to conceptualize e-participation from the perspective of decision-makers. Secondly, we investigated **what the drivers and barriers are for youth e-participation in political decision-making in Finland**. We followed Lironi's (2016) suggestion to use SWOT analysis to assess the potential and challenges of e-

participation. By asking our participants to identify the strengths, weaknesses, potential threats, and opportunities of youth e-participation in Finland, we were able to gain valuable insights into the current state of youth e-participation in the country.

The empirical data collection for the study has just been completed and our analysis is in the process of being completed by the end of spring 2023. We plan to share our findings at an IAMCR2023 conference to seek feedback from the scientific community.

Key Words

Youth, E-participation, Political decision-making, Finland

Youth activists' perspectives on navigating the online spaces in their civic engagement

Authors

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Abstract

This paper aims to contribute to the growing body of research focused on the ever-evolving forms of political participation (Theocharis & Van Deth 2018) in relation to youth (Banaji & Mejias 2020, Pickard 2019) and digital media (Tilleczek & Campbell 2019). It addresses the numerous contradictions embedded in the issue of youth activism in the digital age while acknowledging the crucial role of media in the social construction and negotiation of children and childhood (Trültzsch-Wijnen & Supa 2020). Drawing on the results of a Q research conducted in the Czech Republic with activists under the age of 18, the paper explores the varied experiences of civically engaged youth with respect to digital media and the online space. It illustrates how young people perceive both the potential and the downsides.

Based on the data retrieved from a media content analysis of the media representations of civically engaged youth under eighteen, a set of 39 statements about the engaged youth was compiled for use in a subsequent Q research (Brown 2008). Within the ongoing online data collection to be finalized by April 2023, a total of thirty under 18 years old activists have been interviewed via Zoom, sorting the statements and discussing the participants' decisions in post-sorting interviews. Through this, we engage the youth in an active dialogue about the social construction of "a young activist" resulting from the analysis of adult-governed online content and invite them to compare their media image with their own lived experience of civic engagement and digital media.

A full by-person factor analysis of the sortings, combined with a reflective thematic analysis of the post-sorting interviews, will reveal the engaged youth's distinct subjective experiences of online spaces and their personal perspectives on the role of digital media in their civic engagement. Drawing upon these subjective experiences, we will introduce the customization strategies the engaged youth uses to reach out to various online audiences and discuss how they tackle the reactions within the "adult-governed" in contrast to the "youth-governed" online spaces. We will also reflect on the affordances and limitations of digital media in the daily experiences of civically engaged youth as individuals and as a community from their unique perspective while illustrating the complex and contrasting role of digital media in youth civic engagement.

Key Words

Youth; Civic engagement; Activism; Digital Media; Q methodology

Un rendez-vous manqué ? La dimension participative des Tiers-lieu à l'épreuve des médias

Authors

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Abstract

L'objectif de cette présentation est d'évaluer la manière dont les médias rendent compte du phénomène émergent des Tiers lieux culturels (TLC), et plus particulièrement de leur dimension politique, participative et citoyenne. A priori, cette dimension, souvent moins visible, apparaît peu compatible avec le fonctionnement des médias de masse (Anderson, 2015). Cependant, d'autres types de médias, dits « alternatifs », ou « communautaires », « citoyens » ou « libres », semblent à mieux saisir la vocation participative de ces TLC. En effet, selon Ferron (2016), les mouvements de médias alternatifs peuvent être définis comme des « réseaux de citoyens et d'associations, structurés autour d'organisations spécialisées mobilisant un répertoire d'actions collectives (éducation, mobilisation, manifestations, campagnes, etc.), qui mènent des combats politiques pour réaliser des transformations sociales en ce qui concerne la presse et les médias en général ».

Même s'ils ont fait l'objet depuis deux décennies d'un double processus d'institutionnalisation et professionnalisation (Mangon, 2020), médias alternatifs et Tiers-lieux culturels semblent partager un bon nombre d'objectifs communs: pluralisation de l'espace public (Paillart, 2013), notamment au plan local et régional dans un contexte de quasi-monopole de fait de la presse quotidienne régionale (Bénistant et Marty, 2018), révélation des jeunes talents et valorisation des initiatives locales citoyennes et solidaires, mais aussi éducation aux médias et à l'information (Corroy, 2016) et parfois même formation aux outils de production, en accordant une importance grandissante aux technologies numériques comme formes d'empowerment citoyen (Magkou et Lambert, 2021).

Nos interrogations ont été les suivantes : les médias prennent-ils davantage en compte le phénomène des TLC, longtemps renvoyés à leur « contre-culture » identitaire des origines ? Si oui, en quels termes ? reflètent-ils davantage leur vocation culturelle, économique, pédagogique ou de leviers des politiques publiques ? quelle place accordent-ils à leur dimension participative?

Pour le savoir, nous nous sommes appuyés sur une enquête menée en région Sud de la France et relevant de deux types de méthodes qualitatives : d'une part, une dizaine d'entretiens semi-directifs avec des acteurs des TLCs et animateurs de médias alternatifs régionaux menés sur la période avril-décembre 2021 ; d'autre part, une analyse du discours sur la représentation des TLC dans les médias nationaux et régionaux sur la période 2002-2022. Les médias alternatifs régionaux étudiés concernent la presse locale (Le Ravi, La Strada) et l'audiovisuel associatif (Radio Grenouille, Radioactive, Agora FM, Ligne 16).

Les résultats de l'enquête débouchent sur les constats suivants : certes, les médias traditionnels accordent de plus en plus de place aux Tiers-lieux culturels, et semblent les prendre davantage « au sérieux », après les avoir relégués longtemps dans l'ombre de la culture underground ; cependant, ces médias évoquent surtout la dimension événementielle, économique et pédagogique de ces lieux et insistent sur leur rôle en matière de politiques publiques, en négligeant quelque peu leur vocation citoyenne et solidaire, souvent au fondement de leur identité ; quant aux médias plus alternatifs, ils semblent accorder davantage de place à cette dimension participative, mais pas autant qu'ils le pourraient en raison d'une absence de synergies sur le territoire dans la plupart des cas étudiés.

Key Words

tiers lieux culturels, médias alternatifs, France, empowerment citoyen, participation

Une perspective du care dans les tiers-lieux culturels en Grèce: vers une communication participative?

Authors

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Abstract

Au-delà de ses racines dans les théories féministes faisant référence à la dimension émotionnelle et relationnelle des pratiques de soin, le care - et son absence - ont fourni au cours des dernières décennies un cadre analytique permettant de mieux comprendre divers défis sociétaux. Alors qu'auparavant, la littérature se concentrait principalement sur les prestations de santé et les soins, le manque de care ou la "crise" de care (Dowling, 2022), care peut être considéré "comme une pratique relationnelle, une politique, une éthique et une base de revendications, une marchandise, une économie et un pouvoir" (Williams, 2018). La notion du care a pris de l'ampleur notamment pendant et après la récente pandémie de COVID-19. Cependant, de nombreuses questions demeurent concernant les défis liés à l'émergence du care dans notre sociétés. Est-ce que les tiers lieux culturels offrent un espace de réflexion adéquat? Est-ce qu'ils en sont les promoteurs eux-mêmes en mobilisant des processus de communication participative? Est-ce que la communication participative et solidaire des tiers lieux culturels est en soi un acte de care ou un outil ?

Contrairement aux chercheurs qui considèrent le travail créatif comme un paradigme du travail individualisé dans les sociétés contemporaines caractérisées par des niveaux élevés d'autonomie des travailleurs, de concurrence et d'auto-entreprise, certains auteurs ont mobilisé une approche du care dans le travail créatif offrent un nouveau mode d'imagination des alternatives à la concurrence néolibérale et à l'intérêt individuel. Ces auteurs (Alacovska, 2020 ; Alacovska et Bissonnette, 2019 ; Campbell, 2020 ; Belfiore, 2022) discutent des nouveaux modèles et modes de travail dans les industries créatives et dans les arts communautaires. En opposition au discours néolibéral qui s'est montré peu attentif par conception (Chatzidakis et al, 2020), ces auteurs soutiennent que le travail créatif est intrinsèquement collaboratif et se manifeste comme un travail de soin et de compassion.

Dans notre proposition, nous examinons les pratiques du care dans cinq tiers lieux culturels à Athènes qui constituent notre corpus (We need books, Victoria Square Project, Comics library, Communitism et LUDD). Notre méthodologie est qualitative et elle est basée sur des entretiens semi-directifs avec les acteurs de ces lieux et leur public. Les cinq TLC sont situés à Athènes et ont été créés à la suite de la crise financière grecque, qui a accentué les faiblesses des politiques étatiques, notamment en ce qui concerne les ressources financières limitées disponibles pour la culture. Cette crise aurait toutefois conduit à une approche plus collective du travail artistique et culturel, qui s'exprime par des coproductions, collaborations et partenariats et processus

participatifs. L'exploration d'études de cas dans un tel contexte peut apporter des éléments de réflexion qui peuvent servir de référence pour d'autres études de cas, au-delà de la Grèce.

Key Words

care, tiers lieux culturels, participation, Athènes

“Everyday participation” and neighbourhood Facebook groups: how to engage at a local level?

Authors

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Abstract

This paper addresses online participation at the local level, and aims to understand how inhabitants get involved through neighbourhood Facebook groups. These are digital discussion spaces created by inhabitants, which allow spontaneous relationships between residents of local territories. Two questions guide our reflections:

- How do residents engage through neighbourhood Facebook groups?
- What is the result of their participation?

A few studies have focused on these Facebook groups to investigate their benefits in terms of neighbourhood sense of community (Gibbons, 2020; Breek, Eshuis & Hermes, 2020) circulation of local information (De Meulenaere, Courtois & Ponnet, 2020), exchange of social support (De Meulenaere et al., 2020) or discussion of local problems (Evans-Cowley, 2010), which can potentially be addressed by urban planning (Afzalan & Evans-Cowley, 2015).

Following in the footsteps of these authors, we would like to complement these earlier reflections by explicitly considering these online practices as modalities of participation, and more precisely of “everyday participation” (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010). Participation is considered here in the light of Howard Becker's thinking in *Art Worlds* (1982): just as an artistic work is not the sole work of the artist but the sum of many contributions (patronage, reception of the work by the public, distribution of the work in theatres and museums, but also the “work behind the scenes” of sound engineers or costume designers, etc.), “living together” on the same territory is a collective construction. In other words, it does not result only from the decisions of local elected officials, nor from all the participatory mechanisms initiated by local political bodies, such as participatory budgets (Callaghan & Horne, 2022). It also results from a variety of activities, including those described as 'ordinary' (Carrel & Neveu, 2014, pp.6-7) because they differ from the expected outcomes of institutional participation, such as mutual aid or the search for conviviality between neighbours.

We conducted an online ethnography of these Facebook groups dedicated to each locality of Mons, a French-speaking Belgian commune with a population of 95,000 inhabitants and composed of the city centre of Mons and 18 other surrounding villages/small towns. We complemented this data collection with 19 semi-structured interviews with members and administrators of these groups.

We will use these data to demonstrate how “inhabiting” is a form of participation provided that we broaden our understanding of what it means to participate (Overney, 2017), and to present the three main activities carried out via the Facebook groups: exchanging information, goods and services; enhancing the living environment (heritage, history, nature); tracking problems within the locality. Our study shows that these three contributions are common to all the Facebook groups observed, despite the diversity of the socio-spatial morphology of the commune of Mons, which brings together post-industrial areas and small villages of 300 inhabitants.

Key Words

everyday participation, neighbourhood, Facebook groups, local level, collective action

Towards an Inclusive Digital Future: Exploring the Nexus of Digital Commons, Sociotechnical Imaginaries, and Participatory Communication

Authors

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Abstract

Building a future that would “leave no one behind” is inevitably a participatory process (UNSCCEB, 2017). In this endeavour, the new so-called “digital commons” have been envisioned as capable of co-creating social change that would reshape the culture, the politics and the economy of our society as we know it (Kioupiolis, 2022; Kostakis, 2018). The digital commons are a sub-category of the commons, where the resources are data, information, culture and knowledge which are self-governed by concerned people (Dulong de Rosnay & Stalder, 2020; Teli et al., 2015). Their emancipatory and transformative power, however, has been challenged (Ossewaarde & Reijers, 2017), and it has been pointed out that more research is needed to understand their significance in such processes, such as their impact on co-managing other commons (Chien et al., 2022). This conceptual paper aims to discuss the participatory nature of the digital commons and investigate the conditions under which they can foster the co-creation of an inclusive digital future.

To better understand the power forces faced by the digital commons, the paper will view them through the analytical lens of the Sociotechnical Imaginaries (STIs): in the field of Science and Technology Studies, STIs are understood as collectively held visions of the futures that are both attainable and supportive of advances in science and technology (Jasanoff, 2015). However, these STIs are not representative nor inclusive of the whole society: dominant STIs are generally promoted by elites such as politicians or Big Tech companies (Mager & Katzenbach, 2021), overshadowing how different communities imagine a common future, also referred to as “bounded STIs” (Smith & Tidwell, 2016). Commoning is often motivated by the political objective of resisting and contesting dominant STIs, in reclaiming a particular resource (e.g., knowledge, data, etc.) (Peter & Meyer, 2022), and this passage from public, or private, to common is subject to social and power struggles (Susser & Tonnelat, 2013). It is in this struggle that the digital commons and their participatory aspect hold the potential to empower individuals and communities, by taking an active role in the creation, dissemination, and realisation of their visions of the future.

This paper aims to contribute to the literature on the commons by placing the concepts of participatory communication, STIs, and digital commons in relation to one another, and in describing their role in shaping the relationships between technology, communication, and society. To do so, a scoping review of “hybrid forms of digital commons” (Reijers & Ossewaarde, 2018) that have not yet been commonly associated with digital commons will be conducted, such as citizen science platforms (Weber et al., 2019) or Urban Digital Twins platforms (Dembski et al., 2020;

D'hauwers et al., 2021). The outcome of this conceptual paper would be of particular interest for scholars willing to take a broader view at the impact of technological innovations on the co-creation of our common digital future through the lens of participatory communication.

Key Words

Digital Commons; Sociotechnical Imaginaries; Participation; Citizen Science; Urban Digital Twin

The Hands that Create: Creative Resilience in the City through Corporeal Experiences of the Tactile Practices

Authors

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Abstract

Why do the roles of human agency – and the ‘cultures of creating’ it brings – in creative cities become more significant than simply top-down urban policies and physical infrastructures? This paper departs from such a critical question, trying to foreground the importance of people’s manual works in the contexts of creative sector in urban environment that become one of the essences of resilience shown by the craftspeople living and working in the city.

Empirically, this paper explores and examines the corporeal experiences, i.e., the bodily everyday practices, of particular groups of people investigated through the detailed interaction and the exploration of the ways in which human senses play a significant participatory role in these people’s ways of knowing, understanding, and constructing knowledge. The research itself looked upon the everyday experiences happened in three crafts entities in Yogyakarta, a city in the heart of Java Island, Indonesia, known as one of the creative hubs in the country. These crafts collectives are (1) Poyeng, a hub for knitting crafts, (2) Vitarlenology, a bookbinding studio, and (3) Ruang Buat, a café-cum-crafts-skill-workshop hub.

By exploring the variety of sense modalities observed from the studied research participants, the research also leads to critically examine the researcher’s reflexive experiences in doing sensory ethnography. This paper aims to address the ways in which the embodied and emplaced corporeal experiences of the contemporary craftspeople in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, constructed their shared values and cultural identities.

The research employed sensory ethnography (Pink, 2015) as its methodology. There were a series of methods applied in this research, ranging from field observation, ethnographic interview, remotely digital observation, photo-documentation, and soundscape method. As the sensory ethnography is a ‘processual and phenomenological approach’ (Pink, 2015), it is also an important methodological stage to do some reflexive exploration all the way of the research processes. This reflexivity was conducted through the making of detailed notes during the site visit, the categorisation of all collected data (the verbal, the visual, and the audio), as well as the drafting of ethnographic vignettes from selected encounter and observation.

The key findings are categorised under the concluding statement of ‘the hands that create’, symbolizing both the metaphorical and also the literal illustration of the cycle of creative resilience demonstrated by the research participants through their corporeal experiences. In a particular order, this cycle begins with ‘the hands that learn’, then followed by ‘the hands that made’, ‘the hands that struggle’, and ‘the hands that re-learn’. This paper invites readers to embark on a narrative journey of these bodily everyday practices through various materials and modalities – the

conversational interview quotes, the photographs, the recorded sound, the screenshots of informants' social media practices, the ethnographic vignettes from the field notes – in order to understand and, at the same time, 'participate' in the feeling of enduring resilience creatively.

Key Words

city, corporeal experiences, craftspeople, creative resilience, sensory ethnography, Indonesia.

Digital public sphere and political participation of women in Guanajuato, Mexico

Authors

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Abstract

This paper approaches the link between the digital public sphere and the political participation of women, through the analysis of the digital practices and perspectives of women who participate in formal politics in Guanajuato, Mexico. Public sphere is defined as a space for participation in public affairs (Arendt, 1993; Ferry, 1992; Habermas, 2004), which has expanded - among other things - with the presence of media and digital resources (Berezin, Sandusky, & Davidson, 2020; Habermas, 2022; Thompson, 2011). Digital public expression is defined as the practices that actors develop on the internet, to gain visibility and struggle for recognition of their worldviews by seeking to participate in the public affairs (Flores-Márquez, 2019). But political participation is not equal for everyone, women have faced a series of cultural, partisan, political-institutional and structural obstacles, to participate in politics (Favela Herrera, Ravel Cuevas, & Zavala Pérez, 2017; Vega Montiel, 2008).

As background, it was observed in a previous study that women politicians who participated in local elections in 2018 faced serious asymmetries in terms of political publicity and media coverage of campaigns, but gained presence in sociodigital networks (Flores-Márquez, 2020). Thus, the present study started around the 2021 elections and focused on the practices of public expression developed by women politicians in sociodigital networks, in order to position themselves in the public sphere. In those elections there was a double juncture: on the one hand, constitutional reforms aimed at parity in everything came into effect; on the other hand, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions were announced for holding massive face-to-face events. The working assumption was that these two elements would lead to increased participation of women and intensive use of digital resources.

The study contemplated two methodological phases: First, online ethnographic follow-up of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok profiles of 403 women in campaign during 2021; and 29 women politicians after the 2021 local elections, to identify trends of participation in the digital public sphere. Second, interviews with 15 women politicians, to know their experiences and perspectives in political participation and its link with media and digital media.

Although some campaigns were built in the traditional unidirectional logic, it was observed that several incorporated resources to make their proposals more explicit and to follow up on the debates. The feminist agenda also emerged, which had not been seen in previous elections. After the campaigns, the emergence of pedagogical uses of Tik Tok and Instagram to explain legislative initiatives to citizens was observed. The experiences of women politicians show that the

establishment of alliances among them contributes to strengthening their participation in public affairs.

Key Words

public sphere; public expression; gender; women & politics; digital media

The implications of e-participation in the European Union (EU) for the EU policymaking process

Authors

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Abstract

This article aims to present a reflection on the specific model of e-participation that is being developed in the European Union (EU). It proposes a combination of theoretical and empirical analysis of the e-participation practices in the EU, to contribute to the discussion about using digital venues to strengthen the European participatory democracy and their actual impact on the policymaking process. The main research question (RQ) that it aims to answer is: **How does the model of e-participation set in place by the European institutions contribute to participatory policymaking at a supranational level?**

The participatory turn in the European policymaking process is consistently linked to the democratic deficit of the EU and the necessity of gaining more citizen support for overcoming it (Psygkas, 2017; Abels, 2009). The possibility of citizens' engagement through online tools became gradually more and more exploited by the EU institutions, which established numerous mechanisms such as European Public Consultations, forums, polls, citizens' dialogues, e-petitions, e-panels, surveys, debates, etc. for increasing legitimacy (Lironi, 2016). European e-participation remains, however, an under theorized topic with divergent scholarly approaches and conceptual interpretations (Coelho et al., 2017; Susa and Grönlund, 2012).

The study relies on an extensive literature review and empirical analysis of different initiatives, projects, and programmes aimed to increase citizens' participation in EU policymaking after 2009. Additionally, by considering different platforms set in place by the European institutions with the goal of engaging citizens in consultations, debates and deliberative processes, this contribution initiates a conceptual discussion about the nature of e-participation in the EU.

This article strives, firstly, for a deeper understanding of how the EU, with its complex multilevel governance structure, engage citizens in participatory democracy by using online tools. "What model of e-participation is emerging in the EU, at a supranational level?" is the first sub-research question (sub-RQ1) that it addresses. Starting from an overview of various initiatives, projects, and programmes developed by the EU after 2009 with the goal of involving citizens in policymaking, the authors aim to outline different models and conceptual understandings of e-participation. These will be analysed through the theoretical lenses of digital democratic affordances (Deseriis, 2021) and systemised under a model of e-participation in the EU.

Secondly, building on the identified examples of e-participation, the article will look at how different platforms enable impact at a policy level, in the policy process. Building on the basic

functions of e-participation (Aicholzer and Rose, 2020) and deriving from the EU policymaking process, the authors try to identify: How is e-participation integrated into the policy cycle, within EU institutions? (sub-RQ2).

The article will conclude by reflecting on the current understandings and applications of e-participation at a supranational level, in the EU, its policy impact and potentialities.

Key Words

E-participation; European Union; participatory policymaking; digital democratic affordances

How Platformisation Shape the Formation and Dissemination of Public Appeals: Analysis of Labour’s Right-safeguarding in China

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Abstract

How does platformisation shape the formation and dissemination of public appeals in current China? Public appeals are different from public topics, which are clear in communication objects (public power) and specific in communication contents (rights safeguarding) according to their initiators and disseminators. What is more, they are expected to cause fast, accurate, and focused communication effects, rather than widespread discussion in the public. The penetration of digital platforms has greatly promoted the formation, diffusion, and feedback of public appeals. On the one hand, the transmission path of public appeals is usually de-centralised, which is different from the situation in that the intellectual elite in the Internet era launched appeals as opinion leaders. Theoretically, any individual Internet user can spread appeals through low-threshold methods such as short videos to ignite the transmission process. On the other hand, from the perspective of social governance, unlike the platform-based metaphor of “flattening the hierarchical structure of powers” in European and American societies, the platform is more like serving national power in China, so that it can accommodate and adjust the market boundary and social flexibility.

This paper focuses on two new models of labour rights protection: “truck drivers protest against the decline of freight rates online” and “programmers protest against overtime working (‘996’) online”. Using research methods including grounded theory and semi-structured interviews, it attempts to explore what new features and mechanisms are available for the formation and dissemination of public appeals in the era of platformisation. First of all, the online expression of appeals is replacing the traditional offline strike. A truck driver can quickly attract the attention of a large number of peers by just shooting a remonstrative short video and uploading it. Secondly, the volume of appeal is replacing the quality of opinions, for example, the programmer group can arouse responses from the authorities only through explosive forwarding rather than providing new ideas and arguments. Thirdly, relatively quick response and feedback from the officials are replacing the standoff between the two sides. The authorities often quickly control the situation by new means such as tracking trends on social media, and sometimes even solve the problem before the appeal reaches the general public. Overall, in China where the social supervision function of the mass media is restrained, the platform communication promotes the initiation and dissemination of public appeals by the labour groups and also facilitates the control and feedback of the authorities.

Key Words

platformisation, public appeals, labour’s right-safeguarding in China, and social governance

OPEN-SOURCE MEDIA PROJECT: COMMUNITY ATTITUDES AFTER FIVE-YEAR ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION

Authors

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Abstract

Nearly 10 years ago, as news stories about the demise of local newspapers multiplied nationwide (Abernathy, 2016; Buccay et al, 2017; Fiedler, 2011; Stites, 2011), people in a small, rural U.S. community decided to take matters into their own hands. With their native barn-raising ethic, state and federal grant monies, and technical expertise from an in-state university, residents opted to spend local tax dollars on a wager that could help insulate them from becoming a community without a centralized information source: They would build a multimedia communication center that could serve as a clearinghouse and disseminator of citizen-produced news and information.

The Kiowa County Media Center was set up as a community media that would focus solely on citizen-produced news content. But challenges such as technophobia, citizen's lack of time to contribute content, and an ageing population meant the media center had to reinvent itself and evolve beyond its citizen-journalism mission if it hoped to survive. This paper examines the community attitudes toward this U.S Midwest journalism initiative after its services evolved over the past five years beyond the original mission of citizen-produced news and information by now offering other services. Survey research found substantial support among residents for both the new services and the participatory-journalism mission. Four main findings from this study also offer key lessons for other community media facing challenges: (1) Media organizational learning and adaptation that meets the needs of the organization and its audience is mutually beneficial; (2) Partnerships with high school students for training and content creation should be explored if possible; (3) Partnerships that help local businesses meet their advertising and marketing needs are critical in supporting and underwriting the participatory journalism mission; and (4) Community media must empower communities by providing quality local journalism and offering services that meet emerging needs. These four lessons constitute emerging research themes of community, local economy, education, and organizational learning that are significant in the broader examination of the role of participatory media in future research.

Key Words

Participatory Communication, Community Media

LGBTQI+ versus LGBTQI+®: the pride of political consumerism

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Abstract

This article seeks to reflect on the role of consumer-citizens in the public space and their manifestations of political consumerism during the LGBTQI+ Pride March, held in 2022, in Porto (Portugal). Protesters, in the free exercise of citizenship and supported by the culture of participation (Shirky, 2010), use posters in the public space as communication instruments for the expression of political and social concerns. The act of consuming reflects the individual and collective scope, where what one chooses to buy, or boycott, produces reflections of individuality and personal distinction, concerning identity and status, as well as social consequences. Micheletti (2016) states that consumerism is “the encounter between our public and private life that takes place through consumption”. Therefore, observing the actions of consumer-citizens in space contributes to a better understanding of this private and public dimension of consumption. Supported by the visual socio-semiotic analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) of the circulating posters, including diverse variables considered by visual communication such as representations of experience and representations of the world (representational function), of the social interactions between the image viewer and the image producer (interactional function) and representations of the visual construction of the world (compositional function) (Mota-Ribeiro, 2010). We intend to deduct and evaluate activist communication strategies adopted by advertising and brands. Furthermore, we will critically examine their driving in activating and motivating the social participation of LGBTQI+ march demonstrators in an eventual reverse or boomerang effect. In current consumer relations, brands act as “powerful and complex signs of social positioning, origin, citizenship and being in the world” (Perez, 2016). This expanded field of action also interferes with the innovation of advertising discourse and its themes. Gonçalves and Pires (2013) report that advertising “is an essential instrument for the civic and ethical education of citizens, because as a discourse conveyed through the media, it is a privileged way of raising public awareness of common issues”. Preliminary observation allows to outline perspectives on consumer-citizen participation in the march, as well as discursive practices consequences of the so-called activist advertising, resulting in a participatory and performative critique to the appropriation of social movements’ agendas.

Key Words

Political consumerism, LGBTQI+, Advertising, Participatory culture, Activism, Social movements.