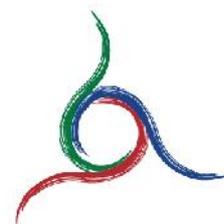




**IAMCR 2018**



## **Digital Divide Working Group**

Abstracts of papers presented at the annual conference of the  
**International Association for Media and Communication Research<sup>1</sup>**

**IAMCR**

**Eugene, Oregon, USA  
20-24 June 2018**

Report any problems with this document to [support2018@iamcr.org](mailto:support2018@iamcr.org)

Version: 11/06/18

---

<sup>1</sup> We have endeavoured to ensure that these are the abstracts of the papers actually presented at the conference. Nevertheless, due to cancellations, additions and other factors, abstracts may be included here that were not presented and abstracts that were presented may not be included.

**Id:** 17180

**Title:** Are Online Influencers Trustworthy? The Virtual Audience's Response to Online Influencers' Endorsement in China

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Fei Fan

Email: fanfeifei66@gmail.com

Country: HK (Hong Kong)

Affiliation: Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong; Hong Kong Baptist University

**Abstract:** Although “go-social” becomes an important part of the public’s daily life in China, the online users suffer from information overload increasingly when they get exposed to online contents shared through various social media channels today. To compete on digital audience’s attention and increase communication effectiveness, online influencers are commonly employed by communication practitioners. However, questions like how powerful online influencers are and to what extent digital audience could be motivated by online influencers cannot be answered appropriately. Hence, 2x2 online experiment was used in this pilot study to identify how the use of online influencer endorsement with different social powers affected virtual audience’s response and their decision-making.

Totally, 4 experimental stimuli were designed, namely celebrity endorsement with explicit persuasive intention, celebrity endorsement with implicit persuasive intention, industry experts’ endorsement with explicit persuasive intention, and industry experts’ endorsement with implicit persuasive intention.

The experimental stimuli were developed on the Sina Weibo’s mobile version as Sina Weibo, the alternative of Twitter, has been widely used in China. It was reported to have 361 million active users each month as of June 2017 and 92% of penetration rate was contributed by mobile devices. As to the experimental scenario, target was put on public affair (protecting the natural environment). The latest online campaign in China titled “Protecting Endangered Chinese Pangolin”, which was organized by non-profit organization- The Nature Conservancy, was chosen before the experiment was conducted in late October, 2017. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) was one of the leading conservation organizations around the world. The two manipulated online influencers were Jack Ma and Jackie Chan. Both of them have similar fan base on Weibo, the first one with 22.54 million fans and the second one with 29.74 million fans. Besides, Jack Ma was the Lead Founder of TNC while Jackie Chan was the campaign ambassador. Although the campaign theme and online influencers were selected from the real life, the experiment messages were crafted and manipulated by the author in this pilot study.

Totally, 86 participants were voluntarily recruited from China, 36 males and 50 females. Among them, 64 participants claimed that they were using Weibo when the online experiment was conducted. 21 out of 64 participants pointed out that they used Weibo every day. Besides, 17 participants were Weibo heavy users. Among them, 10 participants consumed Weibo contents once per half day while the remaining 7 participants read Weibo posts once per hour.

This pilot study, conducted in late October and November 2017, indicated that the use of online influencers with referent power and expert power could positively predict virtual audience’s perception toward the promotional message. However, if online campaign would like to call for

action and influence audience's behavior, the use of online influencers with expert power could be more effective than that with referent power. Moreover, both perceived expert power and referent power could win the trust from virtual audience effectively, but the computational trust could not moderate audience's perception toward the promotional message and not even predict audience's behavior.

**Id:** 17195

**Title:** Diversity as Manifestation of Sustainability in Multiethnic Russian Society

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Anna Gladkova

Email: gladkova\_a@list.ru

Country: RU (Russian Federation)

Affiliation: Lomonosov Moscow State University, Faculty of Journalism

**Abstract:** The paper draws attention to the phenomenon of diversity as manifestation of sustainability in the modern society. In the context of multiethnic and multicultural Russian society, where over 190 ethnic groups speaking over 170 languages coexist, this phenomenon becomes particularly important. We argue that diversity in media – both in terms of allowing access to media in different ethnic languages for broad audience, and in terms of providing Russian ethnic groups access to media channels, both digital and analogue, can contribute to sustainable development of the society. This said, we believe that media diversity can stimulate better multicultural understanding between ethnicities, reduce stereotypes and possibly tensions on ethnic grounds taking place in the country and contribute to social inclusion of smaller ethnic groups into broader Russian society.

The paper thus aims at analyzing current trends in media of Russian ethnic groups, namely the Tatar and the Chuvash, which are in the top-three of the biggest ethnicities in the country, according to the national census of 2010. The study presented is a part of a bigger research project “The Map of Russian Ethnic Media” which is carried out by the author together with colleagues since 2015. Quantitative and qualitative content analysis of print, audiovisual and electronic media in Tatar and Chuvash languages, conducted during a two-week sample period, revealed several interesting trends. This includes among other things significant difference in the number of publications produced for different types of media, with print and audiovisual media clearly dominating over electronic media; a noticeable gap between publications in Russian and in ethnic languages; the choice of topics for publications in different types of media, with culture and arts being the most popular ones, etc. Furthermore, the paper discusses challenges ethnic media in Tatar and Chuvash languages are facing today, including decrease of newspapers’ circulations and readership, and outlines possible trends of their further development.

Last but not least, we argue that further state and public support of media in ethnic languages – Tatar, Chuvash and others – will make significant contribution to fostering social inclusion of representatives of smaller ethnicities into broader societal context and supporting communication and mutual understanding between different ethnic groups in the country.

**Id:** 17331

**Title:** ICT4D: A Playground for Western Scholars'

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Yang Bai

Email: ymb5037@psu.edu

Country: US (United States)

Affiliation: Pennsylvania State University

**Abstract:** ICT4D is the study about how to use ICTs to promote social and economic development (Heeks, 2009). Equality is the central focus of ICT4D. While numerous ICT4D works have been produced addressing various inequalities, there is one overlooked area where considerable inequality might exist— the ICT4D scholarship itself. The “whiteness” of scholarly research and publication have long been discussed (Baffoe et al., 2014). The domination of Western scholars has been observed in many academic fields such as history (Mama, 2007), technology studies (Lam, 2014) and sciences (King, 2004). This research seeks to answer the question: has the ICT4D scholarship become a playground for Western scholars as well?

Some existing research suggests that ICT4D has indeed been dominated by Western scholars: the majority of the ICT4D scholarly publications are authored by scholars from Western research institutes (Walsham & Sahay, 2006; Mukherjee, 2009; Gitau et al., 2010). Nevertheless, these studies either lack concrete empirical data to show the extent and significance of the difference or only reveals that authors from some particular regions are underrepresented. Thus, a more rigorous and comprehensive empirical examination is needed to determine the current status of ICT4D publication.

Moreover, previous studies often imply that the domination of Western scholars in and of itself is a problem. However, the key issue is not just who are the authors but how they do the study. The biggest problem in ICT4D research is that too often it follows a modernist philosophy where the ICTs designed by the developed countries are imposed on the recipients in underdeveloped communities to bring modernity to the people (Andrade & Urquhart, 2012). Although such a modern, top-down development perspective often plagues Western scholars, scholars from the Global South are not immune to it (Heeks, 2018). The ICT4D scholarship will not become a playground for the West simply because there are more Western authors than developing-country authors. The real issue is whether the voice of people in the developing communities is marginalized. If the domination of Western scholars is a problem, it is not because of their Western identities but the way they approach development.

This study will examine articles published from 2015 to 2017 in the top-3 ICT4D journals in terms of impact factor. First, a bibliographic research will be conducted to depict the national distribution of the authors. Second, the interventionist studies where the authors were involved in the designing, implementation and evaluation of the ICTs for development purposes (Dearden, 2013) will be singled out. Following the model used by Dodson et al., (2013), these studies will be classified into either the top-down perspective or bottom-up perspective group. Then, chi-square tests will be

conducted to show if studies by Western scholars are more likely to adopt the top-down development perspective.

#### References:

Andrade, A., & Urquhart, C. (2012). Unveiling the modernity bias: A critical examination of the politics of ICT4D. *Information Technology for Development*, 18(4), 281-292.

Baffoe, M., Asimeng-Boahene, L., & Ogbuagu, B. C. (2014). Their way or no way: "Whiteness" as agent for marginalizing and silencing minority voices in academic research and publication. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 3(1), 13-32.

Dodson, L., Sterling, S. R., & Bennett, J.K. (2013). Considering failure: Eight years of ITID research. *Information Technologies & International Development*, 9(2), 19-34.

Dearden, A. (2013). See no evil? ethics in an interventionist ICTD. *Information Technologies & International Development*, 9(2), 1.

Gitau, S., Plantinga, P., & Diga, K. (2010). ICTD research by Africans: Origins, interests, and impact. Retrieved from <http://www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/ict4d/ictd2010/papers/ICTD2010%20Gitau%20et%20al%20A.pdf>

Heeks, R. (2009). The ICT4D 2.0 manifesto: Where next for ICTs and international development? Development Informatics Group; Institute for Development Policy and Management. Retrieve from <https://www.oecd.org/ict/4d/43602651.pdf>

King, D. (2004). The scientific impact of nations. *Nature*, 430 (6997), 311-316.

Lam, C. (2014). Where did we come from and where are we going? Examining authorship characteristics in technical communication research. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 57(4), 266-285. doi:10.1109/TPC.2014.2363892

Mama, A. (2007). Is it ethical to study Africa? Preliminary thoughts on scholarship and freedom. *African Studies Review*, 50(1), 1-26.

Mukherjee, B. (2009). Scholarly research in LIS open access electronic journals: A bibliometric study. *Scientometrics*, 80(1), 167-194.

Walsham, G. & Sahay, S. (2006). Research on information systems in developing countries: Current landscape and future prospects. *Information Technology for Development*, 12(1), 7-24.

**Id:** 17425

**Title:** Impact of the digital divide in recent Canadian immigrants in accessing and using government online services

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Bhanu Acharya

Email: acharya.bhanubhakta@gmail.com

Country: CA (Canada)

Affiliation: University of Ottawa

**Abstract:** Canada welcomes approximately 300,000 immigrants every year. Canada's 2016 census data shows that immigrants make up 21.9% of Canada's population and one-fourth of the national workforce. Aiming to attract skilled workers, the immigration program has been designed to help boost the Canadian economy by replacing an aging workforce population, fulfilling the shortage of economic laborers, and enriching Canada's multicultural characters.

Recent immigrants to Canada have a lower rate of Internet access and online activity than earlier immigrants (who have been in the country for a decade or more), and non-immigrants (Haight et al., 2014). This situation, which may limit users' abilities to access and benefit from opportunities offered online, is a consequence of what some refer to as the digital divide—the gap among people with regard to access to, skills in, usage of, and motivation to information and communication technologies (van Dijk, 2012). As a consequence, immigrants to Canada may lag behind their earlier- and non-immigrant counterparts, and face many challenges in integrating into life in the country (Haight et al., 2014; Reddick & Turner, 2012), including: a lack of familiarity with available government services on- and off-line; limited knowledge of or proficiency with either official language: English and French (language is the gateway of understanding digital content); and limited digital literacy skills. If immigrants continue displaying a limited ability to use, or a lack of engagement with, the public services available online, according to Haight et al. (2014), Canada's digital economy would experience various far-reaching consequences, such as further marginalization of recent immigrants.

Therefore, it will be important to investigate the following research question: In what ways, are recent immigrants to Canada, if compared to earlier- and/or non-immigrants, experiencing difficulties in accessing and using online services provided by the Federal Government of Canada? To address this question, the data gathering is guided by three sub-questions: (a) What factors influence the potential usage gaps between these groups while using government online services? (b) What factors motivate these immigrants to use government online services? (c) Are there any observable differences between recent immigrants and earlier- and/or non-immigrants with regard to their respective use of online services provided by the government?

Using Amartya Sen's capability approach (see, Sen, 1999, 2005) as a theoretical framework, this study will conduct a comparative research of the gap in digital literacies between recent immigrants and earlier- and/or non-immigrants in Canada. The capability approach is a valuable conceptual tool

for examining factors mediating the extent to which recent immigrants in Canada are able to take full advantages of online government services.

The research findings will contribute to the existing knowledge in two ways: First, they will help us to understand factors influencing potential differences between recent immigrants and earlier- or non-immigrants in accessing and using federal government online services. Second, this study will contribute to the understanding of the reasons for possible differences in accessing and using government online services by the two target groups.

**Id:** 17465

**Title:** Closing the Broadband Divide in the Canadian North: An Analysis of Regulatory Policy and Indigenous Engagement

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Heather Hudson

Email: heatherehudson@gmail.com

Country: US (United States)

Affiliation: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage

**Abstract:** Access to broadband is increasingly necessary to participate in the digital economy – for services such as online banking, ecommerce, government programs, education and training, telehealth, community and small business entrepreneurship. These services are particularly important for people in remote regions, where there may be no banks, physicians, colleges, or government offices. However, connectivity in these areas is generally much more limited than in urban and suburban areas, and prices for internet access are typically significantly higher. While these conditions are commonplace in many parts of the developing world, they are also found in indigenous communities of the far North.

This paper analyzes a recent proceeding and decision by the Canadian regulator, the CRTC, which concluded that broadband is a universal service, and therefore broadband must be available to all Canadians, including those living in the remote North. This was a landmark proceeding not only in its outcome but also in the approach to participation and engagement with indigenous organizations and consumer representatives. The proceeding was also unusual in that it took deliberate steps to fill policy gaps that in Canada and many other countries would usually be the responsibility of a government ministry, rather than a regulator.

By expanding the definition of universal service from voice to include broadband, the Commission mandated that all residents, including those in the remote North, must have access to broadband. It also set performance requirements including speed and quality of service, and target dates to cover unserved and underserved populations.

However, as the Commission pointed out: “A country the size of Canada, with its varying geography and climate, faces unique challenges in providing similar broadband Internet access services for all Canadians.” It therefore established a new fund to extend and upgrade broadband infrastructure in rural and remote areas. In contrast to previous funds open only to incumbents, this new resource is to be open to all providers including indigenous and community organizations. Several indigenous organizations made written submissions and testified at the in-person hearings; their testimony was cited numerous times in the Commission’s decision. The paper examines the role of these indigenous communications organizations as advocates in the regulatory proceedings for their residents and for their function as service providers.

The paper also examines issues of broadband sustainability for both providers and users. Although the Commission established a rural/remote broadband fund, the financing is limited to infrastructure, with no funding for operational subsidies. It also did not address issues of affordability, raised by many interveners in the proceedings. Without addressing these sustainability issues, broadband is likely to remain an unattractive investment for providers and an unaffordable necessity for many northerners.

The paper ends with a discussion of implications of both the decision and the participation of indigenous organizations in the regulatory process relevant for other countries attempting to expand broadband to remote, indigenous or developing regions.

**Id:** 17486

**Title:** TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION AND RURAL-URBAN DIGITAL DIVIDE IN INDIA

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Manushi ..

Email: manushi123@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: Indian Institute of Mass Communication

**Abstract:** A technology driven digital age in its own way manifests a new type of inequality which has both economic and social ramifications. This inequality is clearly visible among those who have access to information through ICTs and those who don't. The growth of developmental process requires that this digital divide be minimal. Access to Information through digital platforms will play a more critical role in coming years. Information and Communication Technologies offers huge potential to growing societies.

ICTs initiated the concept of a global village and technological innovations triggered the birth of information society. Information is the peg around which the ICTs revolve and developmental progress is closely linked to emerging communication technologies. Faster dissemination of information through ICTs has created a web wherein connectivity is the key element.

High rural tele-density over the years has given a boost to the digital penetration in India and the Government's focus is now squarely on rural broadband. Technology has become more affordable and internet access increasingly ubiquitous but the digital divide between urban and rural India still continues. Illiteracy, incapability to access technology, non availability of content in local language, lop sided infrastructure further widen this divide.

The paper unveils the technological transformation underway in the emerging Indian digital landscape by looking at ICT user patterns both in terms of usage and information flow especially in the rural areas of the country. Keeping in view the vastness of its landscape, inherent cultural social diversity and disparities which makes the functionality of ICTs challenging. On the one hand ICTs are involved in bringing the world closer through technology but on the other hand technological transformation is creating a digital divide in the urban – rural landscape of this vast country.

**Id:** 17617

**Title:** Digital stratification: Class, status group and parties in the age of the Internet

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Massimo Ragnedda

Email: massimo.ragnedda@northumbria.ac.uk

Country: GB (United Kingdom)

Affiliation: Northumbria University

**Abstract:** This paper takes the Weberian social stratification model as a platform to examine digital inequalities, by explaining how social stratification is associated with different digital skills and practices, and tend to produce forms of inequality in the digital realm. This paper attempts to explain how and why the process of social stratification is relevant and useful to the study of digital inequalities. The aim is to develop an approach to digital inequality that acknowledges the process of stratification in a digital-enabled society. Digital inequalities are analysed not as separate forms of inequalities, but in relation to the social inequalities that exist in the offline world. Digital inequalities are embedded in the cultural, social and political context in which they emerge and cannot be disconnected from the social inequalities. Digital inequalities are, as the social inequalities, influenced by the Weberian triadic relationship at the base of the process of social stratification, namely class, social status and power. More specifically, the individuals' economic position in society (class), the level of prestige individuals have (status group) and their influence on the decision-making process (power) effect the digital divide. Does this mean that the digital sphere is stratified? If so, do social and digital stratification follow the same patterns and reproduce the same hierarchies and inequalities? And, more specifically, how and why the Weberian analysis of social stratification sounds useful for the analyses of inequalities in the digital arena? This paper will attempt to shed light onto these intricate issues, proposing a nuanced theoretical approach that introduces the Digital Stratification, here intended as an idealtype. By adopting a Weberian perspective this paper seeks to recontextualize the process of social stratification in the digital realm. The aim is to understand the relevance of the three elements of the social stratification - social class, status group and power - in determining inequalities in the digital sphere, how they influence the process of digital inclusion/exclusion and how, in turn, this influence the social inequalities.

**Id:** 17628

**Title:** Seniors, e-commerce and e-government: toward breaking of the third digital divide

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Leopoldo Abad

Email: abad.fhm@ceu.es

Country: ES (Spain)

Affiliation: CEU San Pablo University Madrid

Name: Carmen Llorente

Email: carmenllore@gmail.com

Country: ES (Spain)

Affiliation: Complutense University Madrid

Name: María Sánchez Valle

Email: mvalle.fhum@ceu.es

Country: ES (Spain)

Affiliation: CEU San Pablo University Madrid

Name: Mónica Viñarás

Email: monica.vinarasabad@ceu.es

Country: ES (Spain)

Affiliation: CEU San Pablo University Madrid

Name: Marilé Pretel

Email: mapretel.fhm@ceu.es

Country: ES (Spain)

Affiliation: CEU San Pablo University

**Abstract:** One of the challenges of the actual society is how the digital skills are created, preserved, passed on, and archived; specially for the elderly. This paper is based on the activities carried out in the field of the research project "Seniors, e-commerce and e-government: toward breaking of the Third digital divide" (funded by Spanish Minister of Economy and Competitiveness). This paper confirms the conviction of the older people over the advantages it could offer e-commerce and e-government while raised their reluctance to use. Demographic data show a clearly aging of the Spanish population (the percentage of people over 65 in Spain will increase from 17.3% in 2010 to 36.4% in 2050 (Report IMSERSO 2012) while studies on e-commerce and e-government show an increase in the last year in our country in this type of activity on-line by 18% and 11%, respectively (INE 2017). However, both increases are not rigged. People over 65 who made online purchases account for only 2.3% of the total. Who perform online transactions with the public administration account for 4.14%. Given this reality, this paper aims to analyze the motives and causes that limit the access of this population to such products and services. Based on this analysis, the goal of this paper would make a proposal on the criteria, conditions and environments that allow older people to access websites and other tools related to e-

commerce and e-government from a position of security and confidence. The results show acceptance of the use of electronic resources for the most routine and simple tasks due to the speed and convenience they offer while simultaneously promoting the autonomy and empowerment of the elderly. However, there is a series of points that have a negative effect on their use that must be addressed in order to favor greater digital inclusion of this age group; these are dealt with in the discussion of this proposal. Thus, this work puts forward a thorough review of the most relevant scientific literature and institutional and business reports that have analyzed the motivations and problems senior citizens have when they manage internet and ICTs in these kind of tasks. The results show an acceptance of the use of electronic media by this group, for the development of administrative tasks, procedures and simple and habitual purchases online; in addition, an increase in the sense of autonomy is perceived, which entails satisfaction on the part of this social group. However, there are some elements which slowing down its use, especially linked to fear and insecurity that senior citizens feel when developing some of aforementioned activities, particularly those related to e-commerce.

**Id:** 18111

**Title:** Social Media and Political Behavior.

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Umair Nadeem

Email: umair.nadeem@uog.edu.pk

Country: PK (Pakistan)

Affiliation: University of Gujrat, Pakistan

Name: Sidra Umair

Email: brightsaba@gmail.com

Country: PK (Pakistan)

Affiliation: Ministry of Communication

**Abstract:** One of the immediate needs of present is to promote Communication and Media research in a changing world. For sustainability, social inclusion is one of the core element, so it is a dire need of time to improve the understanding that how social media is used? People make their perceptions through Social media . People get information and entertainment through Social media . Social media has become very popular medium throughout the world. People share ideas,information, pictures to update others. This study will explore the nexus of Social media and political campaigns. This study will find effects of Social media on youth's perception in transforming their voting behavior. Research will explain the effects of using social networking sites like Instagram,Facebook and Twitter, on perception of youth regarding voting behavior. Nowadays social media has become very popular medium in making perception of public. For this purpose, researcher conducts a survey study in Sahiwal city,Pakistan.The respondents were from Sahiwal city, and the survey study was conducted on 200 respondents. For most of the people, Social media is the only source of getting news regarding politics. For political aspect Social media has a positive impact on voting pattern and political campaign. The trend of using Social media is increasing in Pakistan, and so its importance in re-imagining politics and political behavior is gaining admiration.

**Id:** 18421

**Title:** BRIDGING THE HIDDEN GAP: Reinvestigating Female Editors' Identity and Agency Negotiation in Indian Wikimedian Communities

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Ting-Yi Chang

Email: [tingyi.chang@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:tingyi.chang@mail.utoronto.ca)

Country: CA (Canada)

Affiliation: University of Toronto Scarborough

**Abstract:** The slogan “bridge the gender gap” should not seem foreign to one participating in Open Source projects where contributors have continued to witness gender disparity within online respective platforms and communities. More specifically, a 2011 Wikimedia Foundation survey revealed that only 8.5% active Wikipedia editors worldwide were identified as female, and editor communities based in Global South can suffer from greater gender asymmetry. With the rising popularity of Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) in recent development discourse, bringing women in the Global South online to bridge the “gender gap” and “digital divide” has become a new practice of “empowerment.”

This study, however, sheds light on the problematic side of this “empowerment through ICTs” discourse, through investigating the overlooked “hidden gap” which women continue to encounter after overcoming the digital divide – that is, the gap of power, identity, and agency recognition which ought to be constantly negotiated and challenged within male-dominant (online and offline) societies. Using Wikimedian communities in India as our case study, the paper focuses on decoding the patterns, nature, and dynamics of such negotiation, and understanding how female Wikimedians incorporate such experience in their local Wikimedia gender gap bridging initiatives.

Using a qualitative approach reflecting on 23 semi-structured interviews with female Wikimedians in India, the paper addresses both theoretical and practical aspects of the question on women’s identity and agency in Open Source/Open Knowledge projects. With the qualitative data, the research utilizes a feminist lens to scrutinize the idea of “empowerment” depicted in Manuel Castells’ “network society” and Amartya Sen’s “capability approach,” and argues that the two frameworks, along with the ICT4D ideology, could only partially explain Indian female Wikimedian’s identity and agency negotiation process, as they omit the structural complexity of an inseparable online-offline gender power relations in a contemporary society. Later in Discussion, the paper provides practical suggestions on bridging this hidden power gap in the current Open Source/Open Knowledge online communities, based on feedback gathered through the interviews. In short, this study holds crucial lessons in re-imagining substantive digital equality and ICT for empowerment in both theoretical discourse and real-life practices. It also addresses the deficiency in current discussions on (a) Open Source communities and their gender dynamics in the Global South, as well as (b) Global South women as proactive, bottom-up power negotiators rather than mere beneficiaries of technology.

**Keywords:** ICT4D, gender empowerment, Wikipedia, gender gap, feminism, digital equality

**Id:** 18423

**Title:** Interpretive Networks: Where Imbalanced Materiality and Unequal Reversibility are Made Possible

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Ran Ju

Email: ranju3@illinois.edu

Country: US (United States)

Affiliation: University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

**Abstract:** By scrutinizing how human and non-human entities interact with an algorithmic system, this paper captures the interpretive and typological notions of networks. My analysis of materiality, reversibility, and inter-subjectivity highlights the discursive functions of algorithms in the knowledge-based social media network. The underlying theoretical foundation is based on a stable link between Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and cultural materialism theory. I consider how such algorithms create new forms of imbalanced materiality and processes of unequal reversibility, and hence enact particular kinds of inter-subjectivity that are subjected to existing power structures. This paper argues that an interpretive network of knowledge learning and distributing is not just a product of its located-ness on the digital connection but is instead of a result of a long history that attempts to create an administrative system for the "governmentality" over knowledge.

I interviewed 5 staff, including managers, programmers and legal compliance operators, to explore how intervention and governance are made possible by the algorithms to the appropriation of privacy, connectedness and coordination. I also interviewed 18 participants of Zhihu (a Chinese knowledge-based social media network) about their encounters with two types of algorithms and how they make meaning from contextual-based data they had created and shared. In addition to qualitative study, I accumulated randomly-selected 12,000 items among all the posting in Zhihu from July to December 2016 to measure the frequencies of connectedness and spaces of hierarchy in communicative spaces, and then use Gephi (<https://gephi.org>) to map the full network and the clusters.

The concept "Interpretive Networks" refers to encoded interpretations of cultural, institutional and material entities that mediate the stability and fragility of interconnectedness. The term "interpretive network" captures the cultural logic of networks that induce human identity and interrelation to respond to novel forms of convergence, connectedness, and continuity upon transformation, as well as instability, disconnectedness and ruptures. Stable structures of networks encourage us to imagine collective consciousness and practice, whereas unstable associations induce us to think differently about social relations.

In China, the networked production that only positively transforms the society, but also reshapes and is shaped by social relations such as the persistence of inequalities and injustices (Qiu, 2009; Hong, 2017). The scope of organizational control on Zhihu is implicitly wide, and this exclusion is striking for some members, but beneficial for other groups of members in the community. For ordinary users, some of them are disappointed with the weighting algorithms as it is eroding the

democratized procedures of voting good answers. For users with thousands of followers, the weighting algorithms act in favor of making the answer elections much more effective and meaningful. When existing hierarchies for knowledge formation and distribution are enacted online, the algorithmic design will be integrated into the construction of hierarchies, and social media remain a challenging space for the empowerment of participatory knowledge production.

**Id:** 18527

**Title:** Unlocking Digital Divide: Evaluating Urban-Rural Communities Internet Access and Digital Literacy

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Justin Adriel Villanueva Bucana

Email: justin\_bucana@yahoo.com

Country: PH (Philippines)

Affiliation: Adamson University

Name: Patricia Ellaine Serrano

Email: patriciaellaineserrano@gmail.com

Country: PH (Philippines)

Affiliation: Adamson University

Name: Marc Agon Pacoma

Email: marckiepacoma@yahoo.com.ph

Country: PH (Philippines)

Affiliation: Adamson University

**Abstract:** With the advent of technology in the world today, it becomes almost beyond possibility to think of equality when it comes to various kinds of technology. Moreover, it is proven that there is a huge number of people in this world who still have no privilege in using Internet, telephone, mobile phone, and etc. because of different reasons. People's lack of access to different ICTS keeps them from obtaining their advantages. With this, people are aware that digital divide is worsening. With the previous studies in digital divide, the term has to do with access to information and technological resources through the use of the Internet. Many information demands, lack of the latter introduced a large challenge. The affected groups are principally the ethnic minorities as well as poor and marginalized citizens. Cybernetics Theory will serve as the pillar of the on going study, focusing on the concept cybernetics holds a major potential in the development and advancement of technology. Furthermore, the researchers established presence of the issue between rural and urban digital divide, the researchers incorporated the theory of digital divide to expound the problem. Through a purposive, non-probability sampling technique, the researchers conducted the survey by distributing the written questionnaires to the participants randomly selected. Furthermore, the data gathering procedure covered a span of four weeks due to the number of participants needed the study proper. After conducting survey in three urban and rural communities in the Philippines, results showed that majority of participants are female. Moreover, the participants consisted mostly of young adults ages 18-24. In addition, the sample is highly occupied by students followed by people who are working full-time. With household income, superiority of the participants indicated that they have Php 21 000 to 30 000 followed by Php 41 000 to 50 000 per month. In terms of material access, results revealed that a large number of urban participants own smartphone, telephone, laptop, and television, while some urban people have tablet or iPad, basic phone, personal computer, digital camera, professional camera, flash drive, hard drive, printer, projector, and scanner. On the other hand, most of the rural communities' participants own smartphone and

television, while only a few of the rural participants have the rest of the digital devices. Findings also revealed that there is a significant relation on the digital technologies' extent of usage, the location, household income and educational attainment of the participants. In addition, the statistical significance indicates that the difference between digital technologies' extent of usage and these demographic profiles presented an actual difference between populations. Also, there is a significant connection on the frequency of use of the participants with their specific locations, household incomes, and education, the statistical analysis showed that the results were entirely not due to chance. Finally, findings revealed that there is still a high level of breadth in the comparison between the comparison of rural and urban communities in terms of digital age

**Id:** 18534

**Title:** Periodismo en movilidad y las perspectivas de gestión digital de una empresa mediática considerada modelo: el caso del The New York Times

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Isadora Camargo

Email: camargoisadora@yahoo.com.br

Country: BR (Brazil)

Affiliation: University of Sao Paulo

**Abstract:** Con las transiciones periodísticas frente al avance tecnológico y los cambios en las lógicas de producción, ejecución y gestión en periodismo digital, este artículo pretende presentar algunas de las más importantes experiencias de uno de los periódicos más importantes del mundo, The New York Times.

El periódico de papel se firmó como una marca de referencia para los otros medios de comunicación, especialmente por se caracterizar como un 'quality paper', y así mismo empezó hace unos 20 años a crear estrategias en ambiente digital para servir como modelo de éxito en el periodismo internacional. Pensando en esto y con una metodología basada en la revisión bibliográfica y entrevistas con los principales editores y jefes del sector digital del NYTimes es que este trabajo va a elencar las principales estrategias de gestión digital, principalmente voltadas para los espacios móviles de producción periodística.

Con el estudio de caso y mapeo de las orientaciones estratégicas y metodológicas del diario norteamericano se pretende presentar una discusión sobre el status contemporáneo de los medios tradicionales, que está inserta en el dilema impreso x digital, y presentar una propuesta que asocie gestión mediática y futuro de la producción del periodismo en movilidad, partiendo del supuesto de que los aparatos tecnológicos móviles dejan de ser herramientas tecnológicas para caracterizarse como plataformas mediáticas en esta última década de los años 2000. Como un objeto dinámico y mutante, se clasifica el caso del NYTimes como especial por ser un objeto de ciclo innovador dinámico basado en inversiones puntuales, principalmente, en programas de métricas y data journalism y el 10% del ingreso anual desplazado al área de móvil del periódico.

En este sentido, el NYTimes parece estar en la punta de los más innovadores en estrategia móvil. Sin embargo, son muchos desafíos y entre ellos están los factores de comercialización de este tipo de productos y modelos de negocio que se gestionarán para que funcionen bien, que consigan una permanencia de su audiencia, los cuales se tratarán en el trabajo. Son varias incertidumbres, pero como referencia traemos el NYTimes que se reflejó en toda la investigación de campo muy segura en relación al status de la marca en la actualidad. En base a esto, esta investigación trae un referencial teórico que contextualiza las tendencias y los cambios del ecosistema mediático con Internet, reforzando una definición de terminología importante: el periodismo en movilidad como situación del periodismo digital de la actualidad. Y también presenta una serie de respuestas y otras indagaciones sobre la cuestión central: ¿Y se produce periodismo en movilidad?

**Id:** 18583

**Title:** [Panel] Growing Digital Gap and Information Divide among Poor and Rich: A Case of South Asia, Panel Description

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: Binod C. Agrawal

Email: agrawal.binod.c@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India

**Abstract:** The panel aims to analyze the findings of a national social media study conducted in 24 cities spread across five major regions of India that covers all major linguistic regions of the country. From each city a random sample of about 150 adults of both sex and age group were interviewed between April-September 2017 totaling to 2663 adult respondents. The paper attempts to test the null hypothesis that other things been equal, the digital media will not create gulf of information gap between media rich and media poor. Thereby information will not add information asymmetry.

The other goal is to study how digital media introduction in democratic India has provided information equity and access among all citizens. Such an effort is believed to help create information equity with equality to reduce information asymmetry among the citizens otherwise living in a society inflicted by social hierarchy and unequal access to information.

This proposal is based on the theoretical premise of the “theory of asymmetric information” developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a plausible explanation in economic context to explain an imbalance of information between buyers and sellers that might have led to inefficient outcomes in certain markets (Growing Digital Gap and Information Divide among Poor and Rich: A Case of South Asia). In countries like India growing several authors have argued that inequality of information has led to poor becoming pauper while rich continued to accommodate wealth (Agrawal 2015). Further an in-depth analysis will be attempted to assess the extent to which digital media revolution, in a very short span of time, in the form of smart phones, satellite television and social media have increased the digital divide among the multilingual, multi-religious and asymmetrical composite civilization of India.

Chair: Binod Agrawal

Key words: information asymmetry, digital divide, information equity, poor becoming pauper

References cited

Agrawal Binod C (2015), Social Inequality in the Wake of Communication Globalization: Poor Becoming Popper in South Asia. Paper presented in the Symposium on “Resisting Inequality/Enabling Inclusion: An India-Canada Comparison” held on June 8-10, 2015 at York University, Toronto, Canada.

**Id:** 18587

**Title:** Perception of Social Media Users in India

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: padma rani

Email: padma.rani@manipal.edu

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: School of Communication, MAHE

**Abstract:** Social media has evolved from an online way to connect with friends to becoming the international morning newspaper. Social media includes Blogs, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, Whats App and other online forums. Social media provide a means to users to get together and evolve communicative communities in a virtual public sphere. Social media has not only become “sites of information” but “sites of action”: information-sharing platforms and conduits of direct communication.

While media and communication researchers have largely focused on the use of social media, little is known about users' perceptions of social media as a platform for communication. These perceptions could well be important to understanding the use of social media because behavior arguably reflects underlying understandings of the media as technological platforms of communication.

The users of social media differ in many respects; there are private as well as public and commercial actors, and they use social media to achieve personal, recreational and professional ends: some to talk in private with friends and acquaintances, some for entertainment and business while others use them to express opinions and engage with the interested users. This concerns perceptions of social media as a tool that allows users to create and share their messages, in the form of texts, pictures, videos, and links. These different perceptions of social media may well complicate communication between the participating users' – the sender(s) and receiver(s). Successful communication means the successful encoding and decoding of messages by the sender and receiver in accordance with what they presume to be a shared understanding of the context as well as the medium.

The present study aims to discuss and analyzes social media use elucidated by examples such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Flickr. In exploring the perceptions of users, the study asks how people view social media, and more specifically, to what extent they consider social media to be an apt arena for exchanging information and communicating.

**Id:** 18594

**Title:** Digital Solutions or Digital Distractions - A secondary analysis of the interplay of digital interventions and the people in MGNREGS

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Niranjana Prem

Email: p.niranjana@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

**Abstract:** Prime Minister Modi's campaign for a Digital India envisions and aspires for a future of India that is located in the digital empowerment of its citizens. The first step towards this involves the construction of Digital Infrastructure as a core utility to every citizen. The vision in its capacity encompasses all the citizens of the Indian State as savvy digital interlopers accessing and transacting through the digital highways, which is far from ground realities. The debates on Digital Divide are split through the centre on what describes digital divide, either as the march towards complete digitisation marking India's arrival at the threshold of being a superpower, or the call to arms for the people to recognise that digital technology rides on profit oriented streamlining of societal structures based on digitisation. Technology when viewed through the critical lens is clearly visible as a strong tool for the powerful to further establish their systems of hierarchy. The top down nature of access to digital technology is one of the key markers of Digital Divide. Warschauer's (2004) version of Social Inclusion as a paradigm in Digital Divide that favours open markets and privatisation seems to be the direction the PM is heading in. This in India's case deeply affects hard won rights based programmes.

The flagship of India's rights based development programme that was brought into existence based on the demands of the people is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) of the Government of India, that ensures employment for a 100 days in a year to every citizen in India for a wage of around 183 Rupees. The entire programme aims to be based out of the Village level governance mechanism, The Panchayat. The community is expected to be deeply involved in the entire process of generating works and benefitting from it. Accountability and transparency are to be ensured through Village meetings called Gram Sabhas. The workers themselves and the villagers in many instances are not digitally literate. The digitisation of the processes in MGNREGS has been studied by various scholars and development practitioners. This paper will employ secondary analysis of research material produced on this move to digitisation and a critical lens that frame the digitisation in the light of where people stand with respect to the state and its implementation imperative in India. With MGNREGS MIS, Aadhar, banking and other digital interventions in MGNREGS, the attempt to technologise and solve the issues that exist and consistently emerge in a programme of such a scale is important to be analysed. The paper would be looking at material that documents the accessibility/inaccessibility of these interventions to the communities, the role of the digital interventions in either providing solutions or distractions to the issues that the communities face with MGNREGS, the efficacy and the extent to which the digital interventions have achieved their said goals and finally any documentation that provides an insight into the communities' perspective of the digital interventions.

**Id:** 18603

**Title:** Social Media Usage and Perception among People in Karnataka, India

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: Manjushree Naik

Email: manjushreegn@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: school of communication, MAHE

**Abstract:** Information and communication technology has changed rapidly over the past 20 to 25 years with a key development being the rise of social media. Social media is, in fact, the essential fragment of social life in the present day scenario.

Social media has evolved from an online way to connect with people of various cultures and traditions to become an internet morning news, paper, blogs, twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google to mention a few.

It is used for public outreach and marketing. Social media has altered the communication landscapes in several ways. This has resulted in communication evolution from mass distribution of one-way message into a constant flow of communication and evolution of participatory journalism. It is an uncensored outlet for feelings, opinions, and comments. It has condensed the territorial boundaries in terms of interaction.

What this spells for India is as exciting as the rest of the world. Presently, in India, 28.4 percent of the population (375 million) is using the internet, out of which 10.3 percent are active on social media (136 million). Five years ago, 2.5 percent of the population was active on Facebook. This number was expected to increase to 15 percent by the end of 2016, with Facebook proactively targeting emerging economies with Facebook helps for slow internet speed in these regions. As per the Yral report, increased mobile web penetration is also seen as a key contributor to increased growth in active social media usage.

The active social media users grew at 15 percent since January 2015 to 136 million in 2016 in India. Karnataka is the IT hub of the country and the IT sector is helping to usher in a new era of technology. Karnataka has always been known for its technical prowess. The state of Karnataka has been a place for capitalists and entrepreneurs to blossom.

The paper is based on a study conducted in the four major cities of Karnataka, India to assess the level of social media penetration. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the study. The survey covered approximately 600 randomly selected adults of either sex who were using smartphones in addition in-depth interviews were conducted among selected respondents.

**Id:** 18615

**Title:** Connected Complexities : Studying Young Users' Attachment to the Internet and its Association with their Wellbeing

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: Shubha. H. S.

Email: shubha.hs@manipal.edu

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: school of communication, MAHE

**Abstract:** An issue that has captured the people's imagination is that of young users' attachment to the Internet. There is no clear evidence if the influence of the Internet is positive or negative. The appreciation of this kind of dependence on internet stems from the understanding of what it would mean to be without the commonly available internet technology. Operationally in this paper, an important aspect of wellbeing is the individual's life satisfaction. It is believed that young people's life satisfaction is influenced strongly by experiences and interpersonal relationships. Not just physical problems, but also psychological problems like poor self-image, stigmatization, and depression affects them.

In order to analyze complex relationships, the objectives of the paper is to recognize the scope and intensity of use of the Internet and the centrality of the medium in their lives and to further explore the relationships between usage of Internet and their wellbeing.

The research was carried out on 18-24 year old university students in Karnataka, India. To understand and explain the complex multi-dimensional association between Internet usage and well-being of young adults. This study used multiple approaches that included the tool to measure the role of the internet and also estimate the wellbeing of a young adult in an Indian context. In the second phase, focus group discussions were held with groups of respondents of phase one. The findings revealed that Internet usage and well being were not directly associated with each other. Hence the paper suggests examining relationship at micro levels to predict the association between individual variables and separate concepts.

**Id:** 18640

**Title:** Access to Internet, Mobile Phones and Online Newspapers in Zambia: An Analysis of the Gender, Rural-Urban and Socio-economic Divides

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Parkie Mbozi

Email: parkie.mbozi@unza.zm

Country: ZM (Zambia)

Affiliation: university of zambia, institute of economic and social research

**Abstract:** The term “Digital divide” has evolved over centuries and decades. Researchers and social movements have used it to characterize the differences or gaps in access, use and adoption of “modern” information and communications technology (ICT) between demographics and regions. Earlier authors also described it in terms of the gaps between the ‘haves’ and the “have-nots” of ICTs. Scholars posit that the concept may refer to inequalities between individuals, households, businesses, or geographic areas, usually at different socioeconomic levels or other demographic categories. Whilst the earlier analysis focused on comparison in access and use of such ‘traditional’ media as the telephone, radio and television, the present-day focus is on “new media” technologies, notably mobile phones, computers, the Internet in general and all forms of digital and online media. The present study primarily analyses access to and readership of online newspapers among Zambians (individuals) aged 18 and above. Other analyses include the following broad dependent variables: access to internet (including frequency, where access from, connectivity challenges, etc), internet skills, access to computers and mobile phones, type of mobile phone owned and number of mobile phone networks. Others variables are: access to, and readership of, online newspapers (both stand-alone and hybrids – online versions of print newspapers) and sourcing of news from Facebook and Twitter. The motivations for reading online newspapers were also analysed. The above technologies are analysed in terms the following characteristics or attributes to describe the divide: age, gender, income, education, age, employment status, geographic location (rural Vs Urban areas and low Vs high density residential areas), etc.

**Methodology & Methods:**

The study combines logical positivist and behaviourist approaches to the search for “facts”. It is a cross-sectional reader survey, based on self-reports of sampled respondents. Data is being collected using a tablet-based questionnaire from 600 respondents, randomly sampled from 30 Smallest Enumeration Areas (SEA) and 600 households from all the eight (8) districts of Lusaka Province. Lusaka Province also houses Lusaka City, the capital of Zambia. Data is being analysed in SPSS. Inferential statistics will be used for tests of relationships between selected variables and for hypotheses testing. The paper is part of a bigger on-going PhD study titled, Online Newspapers and Reader Gratification: Modeling the Effects of Interactive Features, Content and Credibility among Zambian Readers. The whole study is being guided by a combination of the Uses and Gratification, Network Society and Mediatisation Theoretical frameworks. (Full results of study expected by March 2018).

**Id:** 18645

**Title:** Digital (dis)empowerment and autonomy in the digital world: an empirical analysis from a life course perspective.

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Axelle Asmar

Email: axelle.asmar@vub.be

Country: BE (Belgium)

Affiliation: imec-SMIT Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Name: Ilse Mariën

Email: ilse.marien@vub.ac.be

Country: BE (Belgium)

Affiliation: imec-SMIT Vrije Universiteit Brussel

**Abstract:** The increasing digitization of public as well as private services is progressively posing a threat for individuals and communities that do not possess the necessary skills to handle the new digital ecology. As shown by recent studies (Helsper & Reisdorf, 2017; Helsper & Van Deursen, 2015; Marien & Schurmans, 2013), understanding how social and digital inequalities are intertwined requires taking into account that the digital divide is more than a mere issue of access and skills. Digital and social exclusion are multidimensional social processes reflecting broader types of inequalities; as such, technology and society are not to be studied separately but approached through the lens of their co-constitutive relationships (Ito & al., 2010).

Henceforth, new contextualised approaches need to be developed in order to redefine those at-risk of being digitally excluded. Indeed, despite several exercises conducted with the ambition of developing more comprehensive user typologies (Rogers, 2003; Livingstone & Helsper, 2007), limitations such as a lack of theoretical framework, an overemphasis on the quantitative aspects of usage, the individualisation of problems that are social by nature (Marien & Prodnik, 2014), soften the inputs of these interesting and valuable contributions.

This paper thus aims at identifying the crucial aspects that define an autonomous and independent use of digital media with the underlying hypothesis that in today's digital society, autonomy leads to empowerment while a lack of autonomy leads to vulnerability and an increased risk of being digitally excluded.

From an empirical standpoint, this paper brings a significant contribution to the field insofar as it considers experiences with digital tools and services from a life course perspective. Concretely, this paper is based upon 90 in-depth interviews with respondents equally distributed across three specific life-stage: life stage 1 (18-30 years); life stage 2 (31-50 years); life stage 3 (51-70 years). The strength of this approach is that it allows to move beyond the emphasis on quantitative data to show from a qualitative analysis that (1) digital inequalities are highly related to life stages; and (2) various aspects define the daily digital needs and wants within a specific life stage.

The results show significant divergences and convergences in terms of digital autonomy and experiences. Moreover, the results demonstrate how individuals re-socialize digital media, that is to say that individuals no longer confine themselves to a unique medium but use a number of tools to create a range of personal repertoires of communication media allowing them to achieve specific communication needs. In other words, digital inequalities are no longer defined by access to tools, but by access to services. Also, the results suggest that digital inequalities depend on the relationships wrought by and between individuals. The notion of support resources, and the capabilities to grasp the benefits of these support resources, have shown to be a determining factor of digital inequalities.

**Id:** 18798

**Title:** Power, Class and Digital Markets: A Critique of Digital Inclusion

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: George Maier

Email: g.maier1@lse.ac.uk

Country: GB (United Kingdom)

Affiliation: The London School of Economics and Political Science

**Abstract:** Digital inclusion scholarship has moved from its original focus on access towards a discussion of individuals, their skills, uses of technology and the outcomes they experience - an evolution from a technological to a market emphasis as outcomes are measured at the level of capital (see for example the work of Helsper and van Deursen). This scholarship has followed the managerial emphasis of inclusion that propagated widely throughout the 1990s where the focus is on participation in mainstream markets (see critiques of this approach more generally, offered by Fairclough (2000) and Boltanski and Chiapello (2007)). The tendency for academics in the field to focus on economic, social and cultural forms of capital as the benefits of inclusion problematically conflates capital and power, rather than discussing the social production of value in capital - That is to say, they do not propose a critique of capitalism as others outside of the field have when addressing capital (for example, Skeggs (2004)).

By introducing relational theorisations of power that are at the core of post-marxist critique, I argue that narratives of digital inclusion become problematic and overly simplistic. Far from being a clear normative horizon of equality, inclusion is a multi-dimensional reforming of power relations that can signify both new opportunities for empowerment and, at the same time, for exploitation and dispossession. I argue that we must move away from a market model of digital inclusion that privileges capitalistic outcomes and work towards a critical assessment of digital engagement that interrogates whose definitions of value become dominant in narratives of digital inclusion - I propose we mobilise Skeggs' theorisation of class as a struggle over value(s). Further, we must ask how capitalists are able to benefit from exploitative forms of inclusion and, on the other hand, how we might approach digital engagement outside of the limits of the market.

This paper is based on the theoretical argument for my PhD at the London School of Economics, and is the starting point for an analysis of the sharing economy as a site of digital inclusion marked by exploitation of labour and privileging of capital. I am in the process of conducting interviews with AirBnB hosts, Amazon Flex workers and Uber drivers who sell their capital or labour in digital markets to understand how and why they support or challenge dominant ideas of value.

**Id:** 18830

**Title:** Inclusion, New Media and Development: Smartphone and the women

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: namita nagpal

Email: namitanagpal@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: USMC, GGSIPU

Name: Dr. Gita Bamezai

Email: gitabamezai@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Aruna Asif Ali Marg, New Delhi.

**Abstract:** \*Namita Nagpal and \*\*Dr. Gita Bamezai

Key words: Digital Inclusion, Women, Social inequality, Digital inequality, Empowerment.

‘...The digital divide is composed of a skill gap and a gap of physical access to Information Technology (IT) and the two gaps often contribute to each other in circular causation. (Curtis Kularski, 2012, p.1).

ICTs have become an irreplaceable tool in society and it is difficult to imagine having to function without internet access. The number of people ‘going online’ to conduct everyday activities is increasing every day in India. However, in terms of Internet penetration it remains far behind at 18 per cent as against 87 per cent in the US (World Bank, 2016). At 46 per cent, India’s gender gap in mobile phone ownership is quite large compared to countries with similar levels of development and mobile costs. A sizeable percentage of the slum dwellings have electricity and mobile phone connections and televisions even though lacking toilets. But “who uses the mobile and internet in slums” remains the seminal question. Is it being used by all the family members equitably? Does it matter if women own mobile phones? There is a persistent gender gap in mobile phone ownership and usage in the low income setting areas and women tend to experience certain barriers more acutely than men that are systemic in nature. This deprivation in terms of being unconnected widens the gap of marginalization. The paper uses participant observation, focus group discussions (4) and qualitative interviews to study a group of 12 women living in slums of posh South Delhi pocket to comprehend their mundane mobile internet adoption in the backdrop of patriarchy and gender inequalities. The study aims to explore the implications of technology mediated through structure and power dynamics that may further accentuate the discriminations in appropriating the technology and empowering the users. Theories on digital divide, development divide, and critical theory would be the cornerstone of the study. ‘Digital inequalities are a structural issue that requires fundamental changes and public policy interventions, amongst other politics of redistribution.’

**Bibliography**

1. Brants, K. and Frissen, V. (2003), “Inclusion and exclusion in the information society”, Final deliverable, The European Media and Technology in Everyday Life Network.
2. Mariën, Ilse. and Prodnik, Jernej A. Digital inclusion and user (dis)empowerment: a critical perspective

3. Selwyn, N. (2004), "Reconsidering political and popular understandings of the digital divide", *New Media and Society*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 341-362.
4. Women and Mobile in India: Realising the opportunity,  
<https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/category/programme/connected-women>.

---

\*Namita Nagpal is a Ph.D. D. student at the USMC, GURU GOBIND SINGH INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY Dwarka, Delhi. 78.

\*\*Dr. Gita Bamezai Ph.D. Head, Department of Communication Research, Indian Institute of Mass Communication JNU Campus, Aruna Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi 110067 India

**Id:** 18992

**Title:** Augmented Reality: a new informational layer of reality

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Eduardo Zilles Borba

Email: ezillesborba@gmail.com

Country: BR (Brazil)

Affiliation: University of Sao Paulo (USP); Faculdades Integradas de Taquara (FACCAT)

**Abstract:** The visualization of computer images awakes a certain fascination in the human subconscious. Due to its possibilities for real-time creation, edition and manipulation, those kinds of images are even more interesting. Like a dream, a thought or even Plato's Theory of Forms and Ideas, in which the Greek philosopher theorizes that a person can imagine the form of an object and change it in many ways (shape, colors, textures, etc.), inside the digital screen universe it is also possible to transform or reconfigure any object properties.

On this way, with this paper we launch a critical look to the images generated by augmented reality devices (AR). After all, they are images which broke out the digital screen boundaries and mix themselves with the physical world (with urban spaces, real objects or even people). According to Kirner et al. (2006), AR must be understood as an interface that mixes digital images with physical ones. So, the user visualizes virtual projections merging with real landscapes. It means, this hyper-reality provides hybrid experiences with places, objects and activities. Azuma (2001) says AR has a huge potential as a medium, especially because it merges the real and the virtual universes and, consequently, elevates the degree of information about anything.

But, how does AR works? Which devices provide an user-friendly mediation between transmitter and receiver? What is really augmented in the AR? And, also, how does the media and communication field can explore the use and generate informational contents for this emerging platform? These are, precisely, the aspects we propose to discuss with this essay.

To conduct a discussion about AR applied as a media where the informational layer merges with the physical landscape or objects we consider imperative to present references about its fundamentals, principles and characteristics (Azuma, 2001; Bowman et al. 2005; Adam et al., 1993; Charitos, 2004). But we also decided to present three case studies that allow us to explore empirically the augmented environment and, so on, make notes about the technical interactions, the technological devices, the perception of new layers of reality and the possible cognitive and social impacts this kind of media may produce in our society.

**Keywords:** Augmented reality; Mixed reality; Hyper-reality; Digital media; Devices; Cyber Culture.

**Id:** 19167

**Title:** Digital Culture and the Future of the Ewa-oma Festival Heritage of the Cross-River Igbo

**Session Type:** Individual submission

**Authors:**

Name: Anya Egwu

Email: ikechi07@gmail.com

Country: NG (Nigeria)

Affiliation: Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Name: Adaora Igwedibia

Email: adaora.igwedibia@unn.edu.ng

Country: NG (Nigeria)

Affiliation: University of Nigeria

**Abstract:** It has been argued that “ICTs are the most powerful means to produce, preserve and communicate the fruits of human creativity, including information, know-how, knowledge, and works of art.” However, while the adaptability of the digital technology to ‘doing’ oral traditions is an interesting reality of the modern society, there are mixed feelings about the merits of its application to the production, preservation, and propagation of oral arts. The case of Ewa-oma festival shows that its impact on oral tradition is positive, but also negative in some ways that may cause its extinction. While studies exist on the effect of digital technology on the oral types of some communities in Africa, none exists on Ewa-oma festival, practiced in Nkporo, Edda and Afikpo communities in South-Eastern Nigeria, even though the intervention of digital technology is transforming the festival in hitherto unimaginable ways. On the positive side, as an improvised theatre, the attendant problem of memory loss challenged the production of Ewa-oma performances. But today, the mediation of the digital technology mitigates the limitation imposed by memory loss, as the performers now utilize it to aid memory during performance. Also, in recent times, individuals have begun to Digitalize and mass-produce Ewa-oma performances for commercial distribution. While this may be considered positive because the living condition of the individuals involved may be said to have improved, it, however, undermines the ethics of the festival and could lead to its extinction. Ewa-oma is a one day annual theatre contrived to satirize social deviants, with a curative purpose. Traditionally, the behaviours (which are mostly actual misconduct of individuals and institutions) satirized on the Ewa-oma day are accounted to have gone with the day and must never be repeated in whatever form afterwards. The practice of containing the show within a day and pretending to forget the event of the day afterwards has helped to sustain the festival which has for decades been an instrument of deterrent of misconduct and for social cohesion among the people. This is because the satirized are able to bear the shame of the public exposure of their aberrant conduct since there is an understanding that people will not remember or talk about it after the one day Ewa-oma season. But when Ewa-oma performances are stored in audio-visual media and circulated among people (They also stand a chance of being disseminated through the internet platform), they are made accessible to audiences on days other than the conventional, thus undermining a sustaining nuance of the festival. Using the ethnographic and contextual approaches, therefore, this study investigates the nature and impact of the intervention of digital technology on the Ewa-oma festival and speculates on its future as a result of this intervention. The festival is

popular among its highly traditional people. Its study will be a good case towards understanding the impact of the digital technology on the indigenous art form in Africa.

**Id:** 19273

**Title:** A Case of Hindu and Christian in India

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: Leslin Bastian

Email: leslinbastian@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: Centre for Media and Entertainment Studies, MICA

**Abstract:** International Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society Mansell and Peng Hwa (eds 2015) indicated how digitally mediated communication is growing rapidly in the field of media and communication. India has not been untouched. In the last two decades the digital revolution that has brought about major unprecedented changes in the otherwise stable, continuously evolving composite civilization of India. The paper aims to examine the glaring differences between poor who became pauper while rich continued to accumulate power and wealth through information access and use. The paper is based on the “theory of asymmetric information” developed in the 1970s and 1980s in economic context.

The goal is to study how digital media introduction in democratic India has provided information equity and access among all citizens. Such an effort is believed to help create information equity with equality to reduce information asymmetry among the citizens otherwise living in a society inflicted by social hierarchy and unequal access to information.

The analysis of the paper is based on the research findings of a multi religious sub-sample of Ahmedabad one of the 24 cities in a national survey conducted in Gujarat spread across five major regions of India. In Ahmedabad city a random sample of about 150 adults of both sex and age group were interviewed between April-September 2017. Further an in-depth analysis has been attempted to assess the extent to which digital media revolution, in a very short span of time, in the form of smart phones, satellite television and social media have increased the digital divide among the multilingual, multi-religious and asymmetrical composite civilization of India. Further these differences were magnified in religious beliefs and practices. The paper attempts to test the null hypothesis that other things been equal, the digital media will not create gulf of information gap between media rich and media poor and between Hindu and Christian. Thereby information will not add information asymmetry.

**Reference Cited**

Mansell, R.; Ang, P.H. (2015), International Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

**Id:** 19274

**Title:** Use of Social Media for Political Marketing in India

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: Komal Shah

Email: komalvorashah@gmail.com

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: EMRC, Gujarat University

**Abstract:** Indian elections 2014 have proved to be the benchmark, setting the stage for future political campaigning in India. Subsequently the country has witnessed a sharp rise in use of digital media for political marketing and reaching out to the citizens in state elections.

This study aims to understand how digital media has become an extended version of political campaigns and further market party agenda to attract youth towards their ideology. Study would also help to identify the political objectives achieved through digital marketing.

The agenda setting theory provides a strong theoretical background to explain the phenomenon of political marketing by political parties, as the social media platforms provide a huge field for politicians to put forth their agendas for those seeking information and sharing it through social media. Agenda setting needs to be relooked into as the public agenda is taking a central stage through the digital media. Thus, it implies, the agenda setting model could be extended or remodeled to include the social media due to their influence on public agenda.

The present exploratory research is based on the agenda setting theory and utilizes content analysis as a tool for qualitative analysis of content on social media platforms hosting political content for political parties. The study would try to fulfill the following research objectives: Identify social media tools most prevalent in political marketing and their effectiveness in targeting youth online; Understand how social media influences political marketing; Identify and assess the political objectives achieved through social media.

**Key words:** Social media, Election campaign, India; Political Marketing; Agenda Setting

**Id:** 19275

**Title:** Gender, Intersectionality, and Digital Inequalities

**Session Type:** Panel Submission

**Authors:**

Name: Manisha Pathak-Shelat

Email: manisha@micamail.in

Country: IN (India)

Affiliation: MICA, Ahmedabad

**Abstract:** As soon as digital media became popular, digital divide became an important issue. My paper, based on recent qualitative data on youth media participation collected in India argues that gender still remains an important axis in the experience of digital inequalities. Quantitative data analysis based on single categories often paints a skewed or over the simplified picture of social realities. I use the concept of intersectionality to bring out the complexities of the media participation where gender interacts with several other lifeworld factors in producing varied levels of media engagement. I begin with explaining why some quantitative findings fail to bring forth a nuanced and realistic picture of Indian media realities. The reasons include not paying attention to the proportion of any behavior to the scale of the population, patterns of use, and invisible categories.

1. The scale of population-number and percentage
2. Ignoring patterns of use
3. Invisible categories

The concept of intersectionality emphasizes that different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out into discrete and pure strands. I see one of the major advantages of intersectionality approach is that with careful research design, individual, institutional and larger structural dimensions can all be given due importance. The paper uses intersectionality approach to discuss the various ways gender intersects with other identity axes to create different levels of digital inequalities.