



Digital Divide Working Group

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Are older adults able to gain digital skills from their (grand)children? A qualitative study in urban China

Authors

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Abstract

Digital back-feeding (or digital feedback) is defined by Chinese researchers as the process in which the younger generations feed their parents and grandparents back with their digital knowledge and skills. Digital back-feeding has become a widely adopted practice in China as older people frequently ask children for help. Several quantitative studies have already been conducted in China on the topic and proven the wide adoption of the practice in families, however, almost no study has investigated the way digital back-feeding functions and malfunctions. The researcher of this study has conducted a qualitative study on the problems of digital back-feeding in 2020 and discovered the shift of power within the discourse of family that is brought along by digital back-feeding. Further analysis also shows other drawbacks of the practice that blocks the older adults from gaining digital knowledge effectively. This study thus focuses on how the older adults gain digital skills and knowledge from multiple channels including and more than digital back-feeding. The paper will formulate a model of how digital skills and knowledge is passed on to the older adults and how these methods can be improved in the future.

China has been categorized as an aging society since 2000 with over 10% of the population aged over 60. However, the Chinese digital media has showed a paradoxical development with lots of new media emerging while the population getting older. As the old become marginalized in the digital society, digital back-feeding has been identified as an important practice to help older adults overcome the digital divide they face. This paper is based on a series of semi-structured interviews with older adults (over 60), their children and grandchildren (32 interviews are completed and over 10 further interviews have been arranged). The study then adopts Grounded Theory to code and categorize the qualitative material and builds a model to interpret the digital needs, skills and understanding of the older adults. The study also investigates how the older adults gain their digital skills and literacy, with specific reference to the widely observed practice of 'digital back-feeding' in China.

Submission ID

24

From Somewhere to Nowhere: Flow of Dating Application Users in Chinese Metropolises

Authors

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Abstract

Dating applications became popular in the early 2010s as a result of the digitalization of dating services (Myles, Duguay, & Dietzel, 2021). Dating applications offer individuals of marriageable age—particularly those who live in metropolises—potential partners and empower them with the possibility of pursuing multiple intimate relationships (Hobbs, Owen, & Gerber, 2017). In addition to traditional matchmakers such as family members and friends, the Internet now serves as a channel by which an individual can meet potential romantic partners in Western countries (Ansari, 2015; Slater, 2013). Race (2015) used the term the “infrastructure of the sexual encounter” (p. 254) to describe how dating applications facilitate gay men’s sexual and social encounters.

In China, dating is both an interaction and intimacy need that belongs to the personal sphere and a public phenomenon that is subject to state oversight. As tools for meeting and communicating with new people, dating applications have long been under the scrutiny of Chinese regulators because they are considered to be related to obscenity. This study adopts a critical discourse analysis approach relying on a diachronic field study to understand dating application users in metropolitan China. Users of dating applications shift from one platform to another in the context of increasing digitalization, but they are losing access to domestic platforms, and the market fails to cater to their needs. China’s rapidly growing Internet economy has not facilitated the continued infiltration of neoliberalism. Dating applications have not succeeded in providing users with an infrastructure of an intimate relationship, but left them with nowhere to go.

We offer five contributions to the literature on this topic: First, this study focuses on how Chinese dating application users adopts a diachronic perspective in studying how Chinese dating application users, as opposed to focusing on how platforms have regulated themselves. Second, based on previous work concerning the conflicts between states and dating applications, we examine how different powers can affect people’s online dating lives. Third, by analyzing how dating applications users transferred from one application to another, we provide a map by which to understand how people adjust to both the market and the state to achieve their goals in the Chinese context. Fourth, through engaging with international studies on dating application, we are able to bridge our analysis in China into a

global context. Last, but not least, we do not focus on specific sub-culture groups, such as LGBTQ individuals, as we approach dating applications as an essential part of the intimate infrastructure in the Chinese context in a general sense.

Submission ID

101

Social and satisfied? Social uses of mobile phone and subjective wellbeing in later life

Authors

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Abstract

The current study examined the associations between socio-demographic background and social uses of mobile phone, and between these uses and life satisfaction and health satisfaction in later life. Digital divide and uses and gratifications theories served as a theoretical framework for the study. The data were collected from retired Internet users (62 and older) residing in seven countries participating in the ACT (Ageing, Communication, Technologies) project (N = 5713). The data were analyzed using logistic and linear regression models. The results showed that education and age were the most consistent predictors of the social uses of mobile phone. The number of social uses positively related to both life and health satisfaction. Of the particular uses, e-mailing and instant messaging were associated with greater life and greater health satisfaction. The results imply that socio-demographic background predicts the engagement in social uses of mobile phone in later life, that these uses play an overall significant role in wellbeing in later life, and that some particular uses play a greater role than others in this regard.

Submission ID

106

The Impact of Online Reading on Citizens' Perception of Public Values in China——Based on Empirical Data from CGSS 2018

Authors

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Abstract

Benefits and drawbacks come in parallel with the development of social digitization. On the one hand, digital activities provide people with convenience to communicate and interact without face-to-face contact, which comes especially prominent during the pandemic. On the other hand, our society is operated and evolved in a more digital and virtual direction, which has however led to the exclusion of certain groups such as those of 'digital have-not' or 'digital have-less'.

The continuation and recurrence of COVID-19 are posing greater challenges to an aging society in this digital age. Due to the need for keeping social distance and the decline in going out, people are relying more on digital social interaction. Based on the digital divide theory, the social relationships and quality of lives of the elderly people during and after COVID-19 may be impacted more than other social groups. Frail older people without access to the Internet could struggle with the double burden of social and digital exclusion in the post-pandemic era (*Seifert et al., 2021*). In this context, it is necessary to explore ways to enrich the spiritual life of the elderly and enhance their social participation under the pandemic situation.

According to the United Nations' framework of *Active Aging*, governments and societies must give adequate care to older people and enable them to participate actively in society to guarantee their achievements in full "health", "participation" and "security". Based on relevant theories and existing studies, *reading* plays an important role in enriching the spiritual life of the people and improving their well-beings (*Laermans et al., 2021; Dewan, 2016; Latchem, & Greenhalgh, 2014*). Thus *digital reading* could probably be a safe and effective way to boost the well-beings among the elderly in the post-pandemic digital era. Before making any recommendations on digital reading for seniors, the relationship between digital reading and active aging needs to be verified.

Thus, how and to what extent will digital reading impact on the well-beings of the elderly group? These relationships have yet to be tested. This study will firstly review the relevant studies of the relationship of digital reading and people's well-beings. Then it will use the

data of CGSS2017, an open database in China which is released in October 2020, to conduct an empirical study on the impacts of digital reading on Chinese senior netizens' social well-beings. An econometric model will be constructed in which the social participation, social trust perception and personal well-being will be taken as the explained variables, and digital reading activities as the explanatory variables. Finally, based on the above research results, digital reading suggestions for the elderly in the post-epidemic era will be given.

Submission ID

117

How do users examine reliability of online information? Digital literacy is manifested in gaze patterns in an eye-tracking study of misinformation identification

Authors

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Abstract

Online misinformation is a growing concern among scholars, policymakers, and the public. Media literacy has become a central proposed solution to combat the misinformation phenomenon, because often individuals spread misinformation that they mistakenly consider authentic. While previous studies have found links between education level, or media literacy, specifically digital literacy or data literacy, and identification of misinformation, other studies suggest that this link between literacy and ability to identify misinformation is not always direct, and that fact-checking every news item is unrealistic in today's information highway.

However, there are cues within and around online messages that attest to their reliability. Metadata accompanying the message: Its source, the website URL, the username and profile information (followers-following ratio, username, user bio, profile creation date, the existence of the blue "V" sign confirming leading user accounts in some platforms), comments made to the message by other users etc., all serve as quick and effective signs of authenticity and reliability.

Although previous studies examined the role of digital literacy in successful identification of misinformation, they have not examined *how* users evaluate online information. This study introduces a novel approach and methodology to examine these questions and

investigates the role of digital literacy in predicting: (a) Success in identification of misinformation, and (b) scan patterns of online messages for evaluating their reliability, as well as (c) the correlation between scan patterns of online messages and success in identifying misinformation.

To answer these questions, an eye tracking study was designed. 83 participants examined 11 items that were published online. Some of the items were reliable, and others were misinformation messages (contained blunt misinformation).

Participant eye movements were recorded throughout the session. For the analysis, areas of interest (AOIs) were defined to export gaze data, such as the message text, image or video, user displayed name, profile information, engagement metrics, comments section etc. Relevant eye-tracking data was exported, and additional variables were created that combined (by mean calculation) the eye tracking data received from all AOIs that were defined as “metadata AOIs”, i.e., areas displaying metadata about the message which can serve to attest to its reliability.

Participants answered a questionnaire that inquired into their level of digital literacy and skills, knowledge of technological terms, social media use, previous known experience with online misinformation, media literacy, political orientation, and demographics.

A “Fake Test” score was calculated for each participant according to their rating of the items.

The analysis found that success in identifying misinformation was predicted by technological knowledge (a digital literacy measurement), user gaze at metadata areas, number of SNS accounts, and income.

Additionally, a significant correlation was found between fixating and gazing at the metadata areas and technological knowledge.

These results show that digital literacy predicts scan patterns (specifically- devoting attention to metadata areas) during evaluation of information reliability, *as well as* success in identifying online misinformation. Identifying misinformation is positively linked to attention devoted to information metadata.

In other words: Technology-savvy users devote more attention to information metadata, which leads to better identification of misinformation, *and* they are more successful at identifying misinformation online.

Submission ID

375

CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL GENERATION DIVIDE TO MEDIA LITERACY AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Authors

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Abstract

The worldwide spread of COVID-19 provoked a number of economic, societal and communication challenges to all people, and especially – to the ageing population. These challenges determined the possible threats to the digital generation divide, when virtual communication became increasingly significant in everyday life. Namely the virtual interpersonal connections proved to be the major alternative to traditional face-to-face communication, and their use was inevitable to overcome partially or completely the imposed social restrictions. Although digitalization has led to significant proliferation of information, nowadays many users lack awareness of the mechanisms that frame their digital engagement with information on line and off line. Age-based inequalities and socio-economic disparities in media usage may deepen the digital divide, thus inhibiting citizens' informed participation in democratic processes. Hence the ability of digital literacy to find, organize, evaluate, create, and disseminate information in various platforms supplements the managerial particularities of information literacy and the communication specifics of media literacy.

The aim of this study focuses on the dynamics of virtual communication during the COVID-19 social isolation in Bulgaria. Although the authorities in the country have responded almost immediately to the health emergency, the crisis response systems and the capacity to make balanced decisions were subjected to a kind of a stress test in a real situation. Analyses of the media practices of that period can contribute to enlarging the knowledge on the role of digital technologies and digital competencies in the post-pandemic world. The object of the research relates to the behavior of the media sector for the time of the state of national urgent situation. The subject is concentrated on the communication challenges to the elderly people.

The study raises three main research questions:

1. How the media participated in the management of the pandemic and in alleviation of the stress among people, especially among the older ones?
2. Were the older people provided with equal opportunities to participate in the virtual communication?
3. What are the challenges to media, information and digital literacy in handling the process of socializing during pandemics?

The paper is developed within the framework of the MEDIADELCOM project of the H2020 EU program. It is interdisciplinary and uses mixed research methods, among them:

- Comparative analysis of the derived data from academic sources, sociological surveys, regulatory frameworks and media and telecommunications practices;
- Qualitative research study, conducted via written semi-structured interviews with media experts and older adults 65+.

The comparative analysis and the empirical study are conducted by academic research team from the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication at The St. Kliment Ohridski Sofia University.

In addition, cross-combining technique for data collection and analysis was applied in order to compensate some of the inherent limitations.

Some of the findings on the digital generation divide and possible solutions to overcome the shortcomings have been disseminated to policy makers, media managers, and academia.

Submission ID

529

Locate parental mediation within wider family dynamics: parenting style, mediation strategies, and adolescents' Internet usage

Authors

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Abstract

In the post-pandemic era, Internet use permeates all domains of daily life across all age groups, especially for the younger generation who have to increasingly rely on Internet for educational activities. Given that differential Internet usage may have an accumulation effect that would lead to or even broaden inequality in terms of young people's later life opportunities and future social attainment, it is of vital significance to explore how the "usage gap" is formed (also referred to as the second level digital divide). Existing literature for

exploring differential Internet usage patterns among youth has mostly focused on the static structural variables such as the socio-economic and -demographic gaps, and the family dynamics or parents as paramount socialization agents have been largely overlooked. Moreover, the related literature of parental influence on children media socialization has primarily investigated media-specific parenting practices (i.e., parental mediation strategies) without taking broader family contexts such as general parenting style into account. Against these backdrops, this study attempted to locate parental mediation within broader family contexts and simultaneously investigate the effects of general parenting style and media-specific parenting practices on adolescents' Internet usage, including their amount of use and types of usage. Using survey data collected from 1155 middle school students in China, the Latent Profile Analysis identified three perceived profiles of general parenting style: *slight-engaged*, *supportive*, and *rejecting-controller*. The subsequent regressions suggested that the *supportive* appeared to be the most favorable parenting style since it helps reduce adolescents' amount of Internet use as well as leisure-related Internet usage; the effectiveness of active and restrictive mediation strategies was conditional on specific Internet usage of interest. Most importantly, we found that the effectiveness of media-specific parenting practices on regulating adolescents' Internet usage was partially moderated by parenting style, and *supportive* parenting could significantly booster the beneficial impacts of both active and restrictive mediation strategies. This research addresses an important agent that shapes the "usage gap" of young generations, which provides a possible avenue to bridge the digital divide. In practice, in order to effectively regulate children's Internet use, besides instructing parents to utilize media-specific parenting practices, it is critical to remind them to create a warm and supportive climate within the family.

Submission ID

571

The Inter-generational Feedback of Internet Buzzwords

Authors

Ms. Ziming Yuan - Communication University of China

Abstract

Abstracts: The spread of Internet buzzwords is a sub-cultural phenomenon. '**Internet buzzword**' is a kind of language variation in digital age. With the development and diversification of media technology, Internet buzzwords integrate emoji, static internet memes, dynamic pictures, etc. Internet buzzwords reflect the common concerns of a group, region

and country in a specific period, as well as the current events and moral values. Therefore, Internet buzzwords may highlight the difference, estrangement and power struggle between different generations, communities and cultures. **'Inter-generational feedback'** is a new form of cultural transmission, which indicates a reverse direction in the transmission path.

In the Internet Age, the traditional discourse power structure between parents and children has shifted. The elders no longer impart knowledge to their children one-sided, instead, they seek help and guidance from their children in the use of the Internet and social media. The children also infiltrate the popular Internet buzzwords into the daily expression of the elders, reflecting a picture of 'cultural feedback'. **The first two parts** of this paper are based on a brief summary of the characteristics of network buzzwords, combined with author's own observation and experience, as well as in-depth interviews with relatives and friends. **The purpose** is to study the manifestation of Internet buzzwords in inter-generational feedback and the dual function of Internet buzzwords in parent-child inter-generational relations; **In the third part**, the author put forward a **'new digital divide model'** creatively, which presents the gap between generations increases at first and narrows later in the process of cultural feedback; **Finally**, the author put forward several strategies for the younger generation and the older generation on dealing with inter-generational feedback, so as to better promote the 'digital survival' of the elder and ease the inter-generational conflicts.

Solutions: On the one hand, **the younger generation** needs to start early, seize the opportunity and pay attention to teaching methods and skills; On the other hand, **the elder generation** needs to explore and adapt to digital life actively, distinguish the real information from false.

Conclusion: The author believes that with the development of the age and the Ideological progress, digital feedback will produce more positive effects. However, the 'new digital divide model' proposed in this paper is far from mature due to the lack of statistical data. This thesis tries to break the ice, hoping to arouse the attention from the academic circle so as to emerge more and deeper research into digital divide, inter-generational feedback of popular culture, the digital survival problems of elders, and the construction of a harmonious inter-generational relationship.

Keywords: Internet buzzwords; Inter-generational feedback; Digital divide;

Submission ID

572

Bridge or wall? A case study on family emotional “wear and tear” caused by social media engagement of the elderly in China

Authors

Prof. Xuan Tang - Communication University of China

Ms. Ning Yang - Communication University of China

Abstract

China has the largest elderly population in the world. According to China's Seventh National Population Census, the proportion of people aged 60 and above is 18.7%. China has formally stepped into an aging society. With the improvement of people's living standards, the elderly are no longer only satisfied with the basic needs of material life, but also pursue spiritual satisfaction. And those “silver digital immigrants” have gradually entered the network environment dominated by social media.

According to Zhou Yuqiong's research in 2018, although social media provides a new method for the elderly to communicate with their children, it also brings problems like less public discourse space, the frequent retweets of health rumors from the elderly to their children, and so on (Zhou, 2018:66-86+127-128). Intergenerational conflict between the elderly and their children caused by their differences in psychological and behavioral characteristics of social media use has increasingly become a realistic and academic problem. Based on this, we want to explore the negative impact on family feelings aroused by the social media use of elderly people.

Previous studies on the use of social media by the elderly mainly focused on the social level. For example, the result of Jessica FY Kong's research shows that the elderly can get more social compensation (Kong & Lee, 2017: 23-36). However, the tradition of family culture in China makes Zhou Yuqiong propose that the media use of Chinese old people should be studied from the structure of family interaction (Zhou, 2015: 53-56). In the process of intergenerational social media interaction, parent-child emotion develops towards Parrot&Bengtson's intergenerational solidarity-conflict framework (Parrott & Bengtson, 1999: 73-105), in which proper handling of intergenerational conflicts can also improve parent-child relationship. Therefore, this study hopes to improve the parent-child relationship by solving intergenerational conflicts when using social media.

In this case, a questionnaire was issued to 300 families, in which both the elderly and their children need to fill out the questionnaire. Following this, 50 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Based on the stressor-burden-outcome (SSO) framework and self-

attrition theory (Koeske & Koeske, 1993:107–135), we build a digital intergenerational conflict model in which the social media use of the elderly is taken as the stressor, the behavioral differences of social media use as the burden (also the intermediary factor), and family emotional changes as the outcome.

Our preliminary research shows that social media, with its mobility and accessibility, leads to the decentralization of intergenerational communication rights, and at the same time deconstructs the authority and discourse power of the elderly (parents or grandparents). And the values of social media use of the elderly are quite different from those of the younger generation. For example, the different identification of attributes of WeChat Moments leads to the “encroachment” and “monitoring” on the online private space of the younger generation. All of these can trigger a certain degree of emotional wear and tear, or even potential or obvious intergenerational conflicts.

By analyzing the family emotional loss in the process of the elderly using social media, the purpose of this research is to provide suggestions for promoting the elderly to better integrate into the digital society, bridging the intergenerational digital divide and improving parent-child relationship.

Submission ID

580

Privacy Concerns Vary Between Young and Old: How Does Internet Use Steal Our Trust in Others Differently?

Authors

Mr. Tuo Zhang - Tsinghua university

Abstract

Across the globe, the widespread availability of smart devices and digital feedbacks within the home have made it quite easy for seniors to use the Internet, which means that the digital divide is being bridged to some extent. However, there are still hidden concerns that deserve attention.

This study explores the extent of privacy concerns during Internet use and the impact on interpersonal trust in daily life for users of different age groups at two levels: effect and mechanism. The study utilizes 3384 valid samples from the database of the China General Social Survey (released in October 2020) to conduct hierarchical regression analysis in

SPSS 24.0 using Bootstrap method with the help of Process plug-in. The dependent variable was set as interpersonal trust, the independent variable as Internet use, the mediating variable as privacy concerns, the moderating variable as age, and the control variables as demographic variables such as gender, education, and income, with a Bootstrap sample size of 5000 and 95% confidence interval.

The results of the analysis show that Internet use has a significant negative effect on interpersonal trust ($\beta=-0.075$, $p<0.001$), Internet use has a significant positive effect on privacy concerns ($\beta=0.248$, $p<0.001$), privacy concerns has a significant negative effect on interpersonal trust ($\beta=-0.059$, $p<0.01$), and Internet use has a significant negative effect on interpersonal trust through privacy concerns. There is a significant negative indirect effect of Internet use on interpersonal trust through privacy concerns ($\beta=-0.015$, $p<0.01$), accounting for 16.31% of the total effect, with privacy concerns playing a partially mediating role between Internet use and interpersonal trust. In addition, age positively moderates the predictive effect of Internet use on privacy concerns ($\beta=0.070$, $p<0.001$). Further analysis reveals differences in the strength of the mediating effect across age subgroups, ranging from only 10.51% in the youth group to 17.33% in the older age group. Although the younger group has higher levels of privacy concerns than the older group at low levels of Internet use, the increased frequency of Internet use is accompanied by a more pronounced intensification of privacy concerns in the older group, and correspondingly, the dissolution of interpersonal trust is reached more often through privacy concern.

The study provides new inspiration for government departments, health departments, mass media and other organizations to bridge the digital divide, not only in terms of the "basic threshold" of digital use, but also in terms of the "negative impact" of digital use, in order to truly enhance the digital well-being of older people.

Submission ID

645

Digital Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of Taobao Village in Rural China

Authors

Ms. Jingke Lin - Sun Yat-sen University

Prof. Jianjie Tao - Sun Yat-sen University

Abstract

Can wireless technology and digital economy enable rural residents in developing regions to achieve inclusive development? According to the inference of a deepening digital divide (Schiller, 1996; Wei and Li, 2009), the answer is pessimistic. However, another possibility is supported by recent evidence from developing countries. Under the initiative of ICT for development, some digital social innovation cases from the developing world can be observed (Gilger, 2011; Phiri et al., 2019), for example, the emergence and growth of Taobao village, a typical e-commerce product in rural China. Within the framework of digital resilience, the purpose of this article is to analyze three digital social innovation cases, where some grassroots communities in remote counties got leapfrog out of poverty and digital divide, becoming e-commerce entrepreneurs in the context of global Internet mobility.

In the ICT4D literature, digital resilience may be understood as a system property to respond to external shocks, grow and survive in a changing environment (Tim et al., 2021). Specifically, resilience can be seen as a means to operationalize the rather general concept of sustainability, which means “poor communities will stay in a resiliently poor state” (Marais, 2015). This article uses the Resilience Assessment Benchmarking and Impact Toolkit (RABIT) of Heeks and Ospina (2019) to compare the cases of Taobao Village in rural China (see Table 1).

According to the 2021 Taobao Village List of Ali Research Institute and the score of the county-level digital village index, based on the e-commerce development model, three cases were selected for comparison: Ningdu and Xingguo Counties in Jiangxi Province (late-mover/traditional type), Suichang County in Zhejiang Province (first-mover/service-driven) and Cao County in Shandong province (late-mover/network marketing-driven): 1) Ningdu and Xingguo Counties are different from Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta, the most economically developed region after reform and opening up, can better represent the general situation in China’s rural areas. The data comes from the author’s longitudinal study from 2015 to 2021, including 16 in-depth interviews with rural entrepreneurs, 463 questionnaires distributed in 5 villages, focus groups conducted in local governments, and participatory observation notes. 2) Suichang, the first e-commerce county in rural China, is famous all over the country for its perfect industrial chain and services. The data are mainly integrated from previous research papers, investigative reports, policy texts and news reports. 3) Cao County has achieved a rise in the past two years, with Tiktok and Kuaishou sinking into the rural market. The data sourced from 3 interviews with rural entrepreneurs (continuously update), and some survey reports, policy texts and news reports.

Based on the multiple case study, we first discuss the digital resilience of these counties facing the challenge of Covid-19. We then reveal some successes and obstacles related to the sustainability of grassroots digital social innovation. Lastly, this article offers insights and recommendations for policymakers and communities in developing regions, to build a pathway towards digital resilience.

Submission ID

751

How Nepali Immigrants to Canada Experiencing and Overcoming Digital Inequalities

Authors

Dr. Bhanu Acharya - University of Ottawa, Department of Communication

Abstract

This study investigates how very recent, recent, and established immigrants who use e-government service platforms in Canada experience and circumvent digital inequalities. Employing a Capabilities Approach perspective, this study focuses specifically on the challenges encountered by very recent, recent, and established Nepali immigrants to Canada in using federal-, provincial-, and municipal-level e-government service platforms. To meet this objective, an explanatory sequential design mixed-methods approach involving a survey with 261 respondents and five focus group meetings with 25 Nepali immigrants to Canada was used to gather the requisite data.

In contrast with dominant narratives in much digital divide literature, the findings revealed no statistically significant differences in the use of e-government service platforms by very recent, recent, and established Nepali immigrants other than very recent immigrants were found to be using the federal-level e-government service platform more frequently than their recent and established immigrant counterparts. The lack of observable differences between the two groups was found to be linked to the participants' reliance on their social support networks of family and friends who provide the material and immaterial resources needed to mitigate the effects of digital inequalities.

The implications of these unexpected findings are important for understanding the evolving on-the-ground dynamics with which immigrants must contend and, specifically, how their

lived experiences contrast with stereotypical perceptions and understandings of their encounters with digital inequalities. The findings also contribute to advancing the knowledge both in terms of theory and practice. At the level of theory, the findings suggest the presence of two conversion factors — social support networks, and perceptions of convenience — that up to now have not received much attention in the Capabilities Approach literature. At the level of practice, the findings suggest a need to reconsider the ways in which the ubiquity of ICT devices and the pervasiveness of Internet connections along with changing immigration criteria are contributing to a transformation in how very recent, recent, and established immigrants experience digital inequalities.

Submission ID

772

Privacy Concerns and Knowledge toward Health Code Apps in China

Authors

Dr. Gejun Huang - Soochow University

Mr. An Hu - The University of Texas at Austin

Prof. Wenhong Chen - The University of Texas at Austin

Abstract

As a key constituent of China's COVID-19 surveillance measures, Health Code apps (HCAs) facilitate implementing stringent COVID-19 transmission control throughout the country. Moreover, HCAs derive from the sophisticated establishment of a state surveillance infrastructure where the central government and the domestic platform giants are coalesced (Liang et al., 2018). As such, HCAs not only serve China's distinctive approach to pandemic control but also reinforce its ever-expanding digital surveillance networks to "collect extensive records on individuals, families, and all associational activities" (Westin, 2000, p.8). Yet, there have been many instances where people lacking technology know-how are troubled by the mandatory use of HCAs, not to mention the associated privacy issues they may ignore or are unaware of.

Therefore, HCAs pave a new avenue for examining digital privacy issues at the intersection of the global pandemic, China's digital surveillance, and digital inequalities. Some recent studies have employed critical lenses to interrogate China's digital surveillance

measures with respect to the downsides of HCAs in practice (e.g., Liu, 2021). They provide rich qualitative accounts to help illustrate multifaceted Chinese public opinion regarding HCAs. That said, there is a noticeable shortage of discussions on users' privacy concerns and knowledge toward HCAs amid the intensifying top-down surveillance measures, especially taking into account the technologically disadvantaged populations in China (e.g., seniors and rural residents).

Informed by prior research on contact tracing solutions, digital privacy, and digital surveillance, this research aims to address the above research gaps and contribute to the significant scholarly discourses around contact tracing apps and privacy. In specific, we leverage the theoretical frameworks of privacy literacy and digital divide to examine a) the levels of users' privacy concerns and knowledge towards HCAs, b) the relationship between them, c) and the impacts of behavioral, attitudinal, and sociodemographic factors. This research used an online survey of adult HCA users aged 18 or above in two major Chinese cities: Wuhan, the city where the COVID-19 broke out first, and Hangzhou where Alibaba is headquartered and gave birth to the first HCA used in the country. Adopting a stratified quota sampling method, a total of 1587 out of the 5500 participants completed the survey fielded from January 20 to February 1, 2021, yielding a response rate of 30%.

The statistical results show the coexistence of high privacy concerns and knowledge toward HCAs, which challenges the assumption of the Chinese public's apathy towards privacy rights regarding the state's COVID-19 surveillance. Besides, the results suggest users' privacy knowledge has significant impacts on the shaping of their privacy concerns specific to HCAs, so do their general privacy resignation, frequency of privacy protection behaviors, and trust in government institutions. In terms of privacy knowledge, users' general privacy knowledge, frequency of privacy protection behaviors, mobile device consumption, and trust in both government and non-government institutions are significant contributors. Also, digital inequalities alongside the sociodemographic faultlines are somewhat related to privacy concerns but more salient in affecting privacy knowledge toward HCAs. These findings not only contribute to the burgeoning scholarship about COVID-19 digital surveillance but also extend the landscape of digital divide research by weaving into the privacy aspect of digital lives amid the global pandemic.

Submission ID

800

Transcending digital divide: media cooperatives from Argentina and Uruguay

Authors

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Abstract

It is a confirmed fact that traditional media around the world are in crisis, leading to job insecurity for their workers and, as confirmed by Cagé, a situation that “has radically deepened over the past years. Traditional media are now threatened and desperate” (2016, p.14). Various studies have been carried out based on the experiences of media startups as new forms of entrepreneurial journalism (for US cases see Schaffer, 2010; Coates Nee, 2014; Borelli, 2019).

This study of media cooperatives from Argentina and Uruguay aims to analyze and compare the experiences of two newspapers in their use of ICTs, by taking into consideration the digital divide and the digital literacy. This type of self-declared “recovered” media / “media co-ops” is characterized by receiving economic support from the digital subscriptions of their readers. For this reason, with this investigative study ten (10) journalists will be interviewed in order to demonstrate whether at the newspapers *Tiempo Argentino* (Argentina) and *La Diaria* (Uruguay) new methods have been adopted in order to transcend the digital divide.

For this study, the digital divide approach is based on the researchers from the second wave of digital divide that argues that framing the digital divide as a technological problem and as a matter of adoption, means to ignore other variables such the overall socio-cultural, economical, educational and political background (Ragnedda, 2020; Vartanova, Gladkova, 2019).

For both countries we will focus on national newspapers that have become cooperatives managed by their workers, the journalists, of Argentina and Uruguay, analyzing and comparing the media systems of both. To do so we shall use theoretical framework developed by Hallin and Mancini to compare media systems across countries.

Submission ID

895

Theorizing and Constructing Digital Capital in the Post-pandemic Era

Authors

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic transferred many people's study and work online and digital technology is taking an increasingly significant place in people's daily lives. At the same time, digital devices, access, skills, and literacy are shaping social structure and mobility in a new way, leading to rising awareness of global digital inequalities. To assess the importance of digital capital in constructing new social patterns, this paper examines digital capital from a Bourdieusian perspective to consider its nature and how it operates in the post-pandemic society. Is digital capital a new form of capital, or is it a secondary form of cultural or social capital? I first evaluate digital capital in relation to Bourdieu's relational concepts. I then explore discussions of the definition of digital capital by comparing two different arguments. Ragnedda and Ruiu (2020: 10) conceive digital capital as a specific, distinct capital rather than a subsidiary form of economic, social or cultural capital. By contrast, Selwyn (2004: 5-16), argues that technological capital is a subset of Bourdieu's economic, cultural and social capital. The paper assesses these viewpoints on the definition of digital capital in order to understand the nature of the impact of digital capital on social structure and mobility in the post-pandemic era, such as impacts from the flourishing of remote working and online learning. Treating digital capital as a specific new capital is faced with the challenge of its measurement validity. This paper finally concludes that digital capital, as a secondary form of cultural capital and social capital, provides an effective research lens to study the online and offline experience interaction and the formation of new social patterns in the post-pandemic era.

Submission ID

925

Accessibility and positive applications of virtual reality for people with reduced mobility.

Authors

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Ms. Laura Aymerich-Franch - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Abstract

Immersive technologies entail important challenges for people with functional diversity (Montagut, Oreó, & Fernández, 2020). However, they also offer new opportunities that can help facilitate social inclusion (Berners-Lee & Fischetti, 1999). We carried out a broad research project within the framework of an industrial doctorate that investigated the potential positive applied uses of virtual reality applications (Slater & Sanchez-Vives, 2016) for people with reduced mobility.

To carry out this study, we 1) adapted a virtual reality prototype to the needs of people with reduced mobility and 2) recreated a virtual cultural visit of a monumental house in Barcelona that allowed virtual access to spaces that are not physically accessible to people with reduced mobility.

One of the main characteristics of the platform we adapted is that it offers certain functionalities aimed both at improving the level of accessibility of the technological solution itself, and the user experience of this type of technology, in the case of being used by people who have some degree of disability in terms of mobility.

On this platform, the use of a virtual guided configuration assistant, bot type, allows each user to adapt and personalize, depending on their mobility needs, some specific functionalities, such as the combination of various interaction systems, changing the space layout of some elements such as the menu, to be able to obtain extra help in 360° navigation and/or modify the size of certain assets.

In order to test the usability of the adapted device as well as the relevance and interest of the cultural application we developed, we conducted a study with 14 participants with reduced mobility who tested two versions of the app, one with the non-adapted version of the device, and another with the adapted version of the device.

On average, the participants rated the usability of the app higher in the Adapted version (M=4.06, on a 5-point scale), compared to the Non-adapted version (M=3.92).

Regarding the evaluation of the app (on a 5-point scale), the participants indicated that they enjoyed using the app to visit spaces that are difficult to access (M=4.79), they would

like to have this app to use it often (M=4.14), the app could help them improve their learning processes (M=4.36), the adapted version was more accessible than the non-customized version (M=3.79), the app could contribute to improving the well-being of people with reduced mobility (M=4.71), and that they would use this app to virtually visit this type of cultural or educational spaces (M=4.71).

The results of the study are critical to understanding better how virtual reality devices need to be adapted to guarantee universal access. Also, they shed light on how this technology can be used to overcome some needs that people with reduced mobility encounter in their everyday lives.

Submission ID

940

(Im)material labor circuit: How do fandom users and platform operators negotiate around algorithms

Authors

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Prof. Yiyang Zhang - School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China

Ms. Tong Li - School of Journalism and Communication, Peking University

Abstract

Algorithms, as constitutive components of many social media platforms, have shaped users' online practices today (e.g., Alaimo & Kallinikos, 2017; Alvarado & Waern, 2018; Bossetta, 2018). At the same time, users' reactions and creative usages also constantly drive the platforms to modify algorithms (e.g., Bishop, 2018; Bucher, 2017; Cotter, 2019). The interactive process constitutes the reciprocal tug between social media users and the platform operators. In this study, we select digital fandom as the window to observe the daily contestation between fan users and platform operators (e.g., algorithm programmers, product managers).

The highly engaged culture of Chinese fandom groups has generated a unique phenomenon of the so-called "data-ization" (Yin, 2020). The "data-ization" phenomenon summarizes the tendency that fans volunteer to engage in mechanical and tedious data labor that

they believe can benefit the celebrity they support, which is a typical form of immaterial labor (Terranova, 2000). For example, believing that popularity rankings created by Weibo can transform into commercial values for their “idols,” fans participated in daily work such as checking in on fan pages, as “data labors” (Yin, 2020). On the other hand, Sina Weibo, the most widely used social network site by fandom communities in China, adjusts the rules when they recognize fan users gaming the system (e.g., Ye, 2021). To maintain control over the algorithms and regulate users' rebellious behaviors, Weibo company brings extra work to their employees. Then, fan users develop more creative strategies in response to the adjustment. Thus, the transformation between the free labor of fan users and the paid labor of platform operators cycles back and forth and exhibits a circuit of immaterial and material labor under the force of platform capital.

By putting forward the theoretical framework, “the circuit of (im)material labor,” this paper aims to examine how data labors and platform operators both increase their work for the platform, how algorithms mediate this process, and moreover, how fan users get trapped in the game of battling the platform by internalizing the algorithmic logic. To obtain the empirical evidence, we sampled the fandom communities of members in a boy band, INTO1, whose active and predominantly data-driven fandom behaviors can showcase the current data-ization fad on Weibo today. Methodologically, we conducted semi-structured interviews on fans in the data teams (打投组) for the boy band members and Weibo employees who made algorithm changes in response to fandom behaviors. We also content analyzed digital archives of Weibo official posts related to algorithmic changes to understand the platform's reactions to various fandom behaviors. We summarize the interaction pattern by synthesizing longitudinal evidence via the mixed-method approach.

In sum, this study attempts to construct a holistic analysis framework to understand the continuous tension between digital users and algorithmic platforms. We argue that the circuit of (im)material labor, initiated by the fan users' capacity to game the algorithms, substantially bonds the users more tightly to the system and increases the data traffic for the platform, which is economically beneficial to the commercial capitals.

Submission ID

971

Digital divide representations in memes about online classes in the Covid Pandemic in México

Authors

Dr. Gabriel Pérez-Salazar - Autonomous University of Coahuila

Abstract

In late March 2020, Federal education authorities in Mexico established attending to school restrictions in all educational level. Education facilities were closed, leading to a perception of improvisation in the practice of online teaching. In a country with an Internet penetration of 78.3% of the population, and globally positioned in the 79th place in download bandwidth, this resulted in the generation and sharing of Internet memes expressing several inequities among both students and teachers. According to Richard Dawkins, Internet memes are defined as cultural meaning units that are shared within a community where they are created and evolve. In virtual environments, this type of expressive resources refers to all kinds of situations, based on a set of virality factors, where their opportunity, intertextuality and emotional appeals stand out, and contribute to their replication, as in memes about online classes. The theoretical approach is based in Framing Theory, particularly from Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford's model. Based in Goffman's work, they propose four broad types of framing: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. From a qualitative approach applied to a corpus of 111 Internet memes compiled from Facebook and Twitter, a multimodal analysis was conducted, in order to identify the most frequent frames found in those memes. Main results shows that the lack of adequate Internet access, and poor equipment are the most frequent subjects framed in the memes sample, corresponding to frame bridging type. One of the main contributions of this work has to do with the adaptation of the Framing Theory to the study of communicative phenomena other than social movements, in which, however, situational traits framed around events of high collective impact are expressed. Some of the frames that we identified can be interpreted as expressions of resistance to contradictions and omissions in relation to official discourses regarding to emergency online education.

Submission ID

990

Does the impact of Internet use on residents' subjective well-being become more pronounced among disadvantaged groups?

Authors

Ms. Yue Wang - University of Leuven

Ms. Yuanyuan Li - University of Leuven

Abstract

The Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet shows that by 2020, the number of Chinese Internet users has reached 940 million and the Internet penetration rate has reached 67%. Information and communication technologies, represented by the Internet, are not only increasingly important for social life and economic development, but also have an important impact on the well-being of residents. Traditional research on well-being has focused on factors such as income, education, public spending, government quality, and social capital, and less on the impact of technology applications, especially information technology, on residents' subjective well-being. Some scholars argue that Internet use increases social communication, creates consumption value, and increases income, thus significantly increasing the level of residents' subjective well-being and producing an information welfare effect (Sabatini & Sarracino, 2014). However, opponents argue that Internet use decreases social trust among residents, causes bad feelings, and thus reduces their well-being (Pénard et al, 2013). Therefore, it is relevant to investigate the impact of Internet use on residents' well-being in the context of the information age.

Different from previous studies, this project focuses on the impact of the Internet's basic function, information search and dissemination, on residents' subjective well-being. Many studies have shown that the Internet has ironed out the barriers and gaps in information flow, improving residents' ability to access information by eliminating spatial and temporal barriers, and reducing information asymmetry by narrowing the information gap between the two sides of the transaction. Then does Internet use have an impact on residents' subjective well-being through the important channel of "information"? Furthermore, based on the principle of diminishing marginal utility, the gains from the Internet are limited among those who already have a large stock of information; the improvement of the Internet's information dissemination function on well-being will be concentrated among the "disadvantaged" who have less information stock. Graham & Nikolova (2013) confirmed that there is a marginal decrease in the impact of modern information technology on the well-being of the population, with the highest marginal returns to information technology access (i.e., those in poor countries and those with low incomes) having the greatest effect on their

subjective well-being. So, is the impact of Internet use on the happiness of Chinese residents more pronounced among the "disadvantaged" groups such as low-income, low-education, and backward regions? This paper will attempt to investigate these two questions in depth.

This study relies on the latest data of China General Social Survey (CGSS2017), analyzes and estimates the relevant data using Ordered Probit model, and controls factors that may cause estimation bias into the equation to effectively mitigate the endogeneity problem caused by omitted variables. The study found that Internet use can significantly contribute to the level of well-being, and that the information dissemination and search functions are key transmission mechanisms for the Internet to improve the well-being of residents. Second, this study found that the information benefits of the Internet are more pronounced among the low-income and low-education groups, as well as the "disadvantaged" groups in rural and underdeveloped areas, which means that the adoption of new technologies can reduce the gap in subjective well-being with the "advantaged" groups.

The possible contributions of this paper are mainly the following three points. First, traditional studies of residents' happiness have focused less on the impact of information technology, and this paper expands the field from the perspective of Internet use, which is conducive to deepening the study of the mechanism of residents' happiness formation and improving the understanding of how information technology shapes individual behaviors and perceptions. Second, in the existing studies on the Internet and residents' well-being, the transmission mechanism that researchers have focused on is mainly the impact of the Internet on social capital, while this paper based on the basic function of the Internet to search and disseminate information. It can provides new empirical evidence for further understanding the relationship between the Internet and residents' well-being. Finally, this paper finds that the effect of the Internet on residents' happiness is more prominent among the "disadvantaged", which provides a solution for improving social welfare and narrowing the welfare gap among different groups of people.

Submission ID

1125

Research on media use and digital literacy improvement of urban and rural youth in the ear economy — an empirical survey from youth groups in Beijing

Authors

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Abstract

In recent years, as an emerging online audio industry, “ear economy” has enjoyed the advantages of mobile technology and adapted to users’ information needs under unique temporal and spatial conditions. Compared with text reading, learning through listening greatly lowers the barrier of knowledge acquisition, and provides new imagination space for the improvement of urban and rural youth media literacy. In the digital age, guiding users to actively deal with the relationship with the media, scientifically and effectively perceiving and utilizing information resources, improving individuals’ digital literacy, have become a crucial link in the construction of healthy media ecology.

This study attempts to start from the theory of digital literacy, using quantitative empirical research methods and qualitative in-depth interviews to explore the following two questions: (1) What is the status quo of mobile audio media use and digital literacy of urban and rural youth in the ear economy? Are there significant differences in the use of mobile audio platform between urban and rural youth? (2) How does the use of mobile audio platform affect the digital literacy of urban and rural youth?

The existing research on the improvement of urban and rural youth’s digital literacy in mobile audio platform is relatively scarce. This study selects urban and rural youth as two groups to explore the current situation of the use of mobile audio platform and digital literacy of urban and rural youth from the perspective of promoting their digital literacy and balancing audio-visual capability, so as to provide empirical basis for narrowing the “digital divide” between urban and rural youth and promoting the digital literacy of rural youth during the implementation of the strategy for rural revitalization in China.

Submission ID

1132

Active Domestication and Limited Effect: A Study on the Use of Digital Media and Digital Exclusion by the Visually Impaired in China

Authors

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Ms. Gao Linxuan - School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China

Abstract

There are about 13 million visually disabled people in China, among which more than 8 million are blind. As an information vulnerable group, they are unequally treated in accessing and using digital media and are deprived of the benefits of digital media technology. The group are kept away from digital media because of their insufficient purchasing power for digital media terminals, blocked access of digital media information and unavailable entrances. Especially since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, travel, shopping and other activities of them have been severely restricted and even affected their survival due to the lack of convenient access to digital media.

In this context, this study, by applying domestication theory, analyzes the use of digital media by the visually impaired in China from the perspective of digital media reader. Based on in-depth interviews with 20 visually impaired individuals ranging in age from 17 to 65 years, this study finds that in the process of appropriation and incorporation, the use of digital media of them reflects multiple aspects of obstacles. In the purchasing stage, the types and brands of media terminals they buy are closely related to the amount of economic capital occupied by them, which means obstacles to accessing media. In the stage of media use, the alienation and adaptation behavior and their low interest in getting news reflects the neglect of the visually impaired in the process of media design. In the process of objectification and conversion, the use of digital media by the visually impaired reflects the complex characteristics of the generation and expression of subjectivity. Digital media creates more media use and consumption scenarios for the visually impaired, while making them exposed to more discrimination and prejudice. They actively guide the use of digital media, naturally externalizing their own uniqueness and internalizing their original cognition and habits.

Further, this study finds that digital media, as a necessary opportunity, can indeed create more possibilities for increasing the social participation and improving the daily life of the visually impaired. But due to systematic and personal factors, this opportunity cannot be enjoyed by all visually impaired people. At the same time, the impact of digital inclusion and digital exclusion on their social inclusion and social exclusion is not as huge as

described in previous studies. Visually impaired people have a strong subjective initiative, which can weaken the impact of digital exclusion on themselves to a certain extent. However, they have faced more viciousness and discrimination than ever before. After failing to defend their rights through digital media, they have been increasingly isolated by the social community. This suggests that the impact of social inclusion on digital inclusion matters more than the impact of digital inclusion on social inclusion.

Therefore, the realization of a more equal and inclusive digital media environment not only requires continuous promotion of the progress of information accessibility technology, but also requires the participation of the whole society.

Submission ID

1164

Digital inclusion of ethnic and mainstream journalists in multi-ethnic Russian society

Authors

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Prof. Elena Vartanova - Faculty of Journalism, Lomonosov Moscow State University

Abstract

This paper develops a discussion about interrelation between social inclusion/exclusion and digital inclusion/exclusion by analyzing and comparing the case of mainstream journalists working for Russian-language media in the Moscow region (Central federal district of Russia), and ethnic journalists working for Yakut-language media in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) (Far Eastern federal district). The present study uses both in-depth interviews with 25 journalists, and an online survey (n=168, including 115 journalists working for Russian-language media and 53 journalists working for Yakut-language media) conducted in summer/autumn 2021.

The study addresses two research questions. First, if there are signs of inequality in ICT access or ICT skills between mainstream and ethnic journalists in Russia, given remaining digital inequality between federal districts in terms of access and ICT skills, and also the fact that Far Eastern federal district lacks behind in terms of Internet audience numbers, cost and speed of connection. Second, if there is any relation between type of media (mainstream or ethnic) and the degree of digital engagement – either frequency and/or

type of engagement – of Russian and Yakut journalists. Both research questions are targeted towards understanding of digital inclusion as a complex phenomenon closely connected to social inclusion.

To answer the research questions, we examined three broad categories of digital resources, identified as components of the index of inclusion: ICT access, skills, and extent of engagement with technologies. Based on these components/sub-indices, we constructed index of inclusion for Russian context, which we previously tested in a different study comparing Russian and Yakut Internet users (Gladkova, Argylov, Shkurnikov, 2022), and empirically measured digital inclusion index of the two groups. The use of in-depth interviews then allowed for deeper understanding of challenges journalists associate with digital inclusion, the impact of ICTs and digital journalism tools on their professional routines, and journalists' self-assessment of correlation between digital and social inclusion.

The paper first presents a review of relevant literature, covering the concepts of digital exclusion, social exclusion, vulnerability and professional journalistic cultures in Russia; discussing the relationship between social exclusion and the digital divide; and exploring the role of ethnic journalists' digital inclusion in the multiethnic and multicultural Russian setting. This is followed by an overview of the data and discussion focusing on the following themes arising from the data and evident across both case studies: access to ICTs, ICT skills and ICT engagement of mainstream and ethnic journalists in Russia.

Submission ID

1235

Determinants of Digital Capital: An Empirical Investigation in India

Authors

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Dr. K. S. Arul Selvan - Indira Gandhi National Open University, School of Journalism and New Media Studies

Abstract

Nowadays, Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) have become a major driving force in developing an equal society. But, there are certain internal and external forces that

confirm the equity of participation in the digital arena. Studies have explored that access to ICTs and skills to use ICTs are largely essential qualities in promoting online as well as offline equity in the 21st century. It further depends on other factors. The research on the digital divide has taken a shift from the digital divide to digital inequality and the most recent topic of discussion is digital capital. The third level of the digital divide talked about the tangible outcome of digital resources and digital capital is core to achieving the same. Digital capital goes beyond the skills and shows the interplay across the competencies need to achieve substantial capital such as the social, cultural, economic, political. According to the Weberian approach, digital capital is essential in connecting to the offline capitals of individuals. Therefore, there is a necessity to understand the factors on which the digital capitals of Indians depend as it is linked with the development of individuals and the larger society.

According to Ragnedda (2018), digital capital is the cumulative effect of digital resources and competencies which can enhance other forms of capital depending on the level of it. Thus, the study stands on Bourdieu's capital-based approach to reconsider the digital divide that is digital capital. The constitutive components of digital capital are digital access (digital equipment, connectivity, time spent online, support, and training), digital competencies (information and literacy, communication, safety, content-creation, and problem-solving). Digital access is the external factor whereas the competencies are the internal ability. The study would emphasize each component of digital capital.

A. Scheerder et al. (2017) addressed the determinants of the digital divide which include sociodemographic, social, cultural, economic, personal, material, and motivational determinants. These could be different in different regions having various backgrounds. The aim of the study is to identify the determinants of digital capital in India. The objectives of the study are: (i) to measure the levels of digital capital among Indians (ii) to identify the determinants of digital capital in India.

The study would follow a quantitative approach using a survey as the data collection tool. The sample selection (stratified sampling) would be on the basis of cohorts such as age, annual income, education level, residential area (rural/urban), and gender. The measurement tool would be developed by adapting the scale of Ragnedda et al. (2020) which used the model of digital capital proposed by Ragnedda and Ruiu (2019). The researchers would validate the measurement tool in the Indian context and would explore the determinants of digital access and competencies. Additionally, the researchers would explain the theoretical focus of digital capital from the Indian perspective. The findings of the study would be curative for policy framework as well.

Keywords: Internet, Digital Capital, Digital Competencies, Digital Access, Determinants

Submission ID

1267

Affordance or constraint: short video practice and visibility production of people with disabilities

Authors

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Abstract

The arrival of media-saturated society reminds us to pay attention to the media practice characterized by new technologies (Couldry, 2012). Media studies in China have long ignored the issues of marginalized groups, and the invisibility of people with disabilities (PWDs) in media studies is evident (Lin, Yang & Zhang, 2018). However, along with 'Internet+ Disability' policy framework laid out by the Chinese government in 2015, the discussion of PWDs and ICTs are emerging.

Prior studies mostly focus on the accessibility of digital technologies to PWDs, and part of qualitative researches discussed the issues such as the construction strategy of disabled identity and their social networks in new media. However, the data of most studies came from cross-sectional surveys, which lacks a process investigation of the media practice of PWDs. And the optimistic perspective that digital inclusion of disability may help PWDs better integrate into society (Adkins et al., 2013) has been criticized that ICTs do not necessarily lead to social inclusion, but deepen the digital divide and social exclusion of PWDs in many ways (Adam and Kreps, 2009; Vincente and López, 2010).

As Goggin (2007) argues, research on the media practice of the disabled should centre upon the power relations of disability and the crucial role played by disability's cultural and social constitution. Invisibility in the virtual world may influence visibility in the real world, and under the dual cultural section, the invisibility of PWDs implies a denial of recognition that would reinforce the dominance of able-bodied culture (Adkins et al., 2013). Luckily, new media has given PWDs the opportunity to produce visibility, which is believed as an important factor in helping PWDs achieve social equality. However, there is a hierarchical framework for the rewards of visibility production (Dayan, 2013). By comparing urban and rural areas, Liu (2018) pointed out that the audiences behind visibility production determine the value return of performance. Is short video platform a utopia of equality?

Situated in a Chinese context and based on methods of ethnographic participant observation and in-depth interviews, this study will follow the research orientation of media practice, focus on the concept of "visibility", describe the dynamic process of PWDs competing for visibility on short video platform "KuaiShou", explore the actor-network in it, and reveal the field logic of their visibility production. Specific questions are as follows:

Q1. What tactics do PWDs use to produce visibility? How to understand the body performance of PWDs?

Q2. What are the core practical elements in the short video media field? How do these elements form actor-network in visibility production and, through translation, empower PWDs with visibility capital?

Q3. What is the impact of visibility production on the identity construction of PWDs? Visibility does not mean equality. To what extent does the visible production on "KuaiShou" challenge or maintain the existing social order in the real world?

Q4. Are there hidden crises behind their visibility production? How do PWDs cope with those risks after being visible?

Submission ID

1309

Digital Divide and Video Games: a literature review

Authors

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Abstract

We live in the age of digital entertainment. It is now essential to study video games in order to understand contemporary culture, as video games are considered the "prototypical cultural form of digital culture" of this century (Kirby, 2009, p. 168). Over the last few decades, there has been widespread growth in the video game industry, but also a remarkable demographic diversification of the people who make up its fan community (Stone, 2019). In this sense, this article aims to contribute to the examination of the literature contributions about video games and digital divide among teenagers, by doing systematic research through Scopus and Google Scholar platforms, combining the following concepts: "adolescents", "teenagers", "teens", "youth", "video games", "gaming", "gamer", "social class", "socioeconomic status", "inequality", "digital divide". This study is especially

relevant given that young people have been one of the groups most affected by the economic crisis of 2008 (Arce, 2020), due to a continuous deterioration of working conditions and the generalization of job insecurity and uncertainty (Standing, 2013). Although this has long been observed (Selwyn, Gorard, & Williams, 2001), the COVID-19 health crisis has highlighted and exacerbated socio-technological inequalities and the digital divide, exposing the consequences of social inequalities, especially in the most vulnerable school-age groups (Gelber, Castillo, Alarcón, Treviño & Escribano, 2021). It has been confirmed that the class condition is still an essential element that determines young people's relationship with technology and their perception of it (Hollingworth, Mansaray, Allen, & Rose, 2011). Parallely, the emergence of media celebrities in the video game world, through platforms like YouTube and Twitch, means that these activities have become aspirational alternatives for young people who have fewer conventional opportunities (Jenson & de Castell, 2018). Therefore, the relationship between video games and digital divide among young people becomes a matter of particular interest, which has been underexplored in academic research.

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Submission ID

1320

The main issues of this algorithm-based service: using mixed analyses of focus group interview and semantic network

Authors

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to learn how users perceive algorithm-based automated services as algorithm decision-making systems (ADS) spread throughout the media sector, as well as what concerns they have. In general, ADS uses four types of media services: media production with high automation, media production with low automation, media distribution with high automation, and media distribution with low automation. In other words, the main issues raised in ADS media services have been raised in three dimensions: accuracy, digital trust, and value transfer, which can be raised at different levels depending on the type of ADS media and varies depending on the user. This study attempted to apply mixed methods to ADS media users by conducting focus group interviews (FGI) and qualitatively interpreting interviews, as well as quantifying interviews to form a semantic network, with this awareness of the problem. To that end, for about a month, researchers conducted interviews with 23 users who were evenly distributed by age and region, and two graduate students conducted content analysis based on interview scripts to identify 27 major issues. The main findings of the analysis are as follows.

First, based on qualitative analysis of interviewees, users could be divided into three age groups: 'flexible taste community,' 'public interest autonomy,' and 'cost benefit dependence.' They had a general lack of understanding of the principles of algorithm operation and could detect the deterioration of community-based trust as a result of service personalization and negative influence. Users' perceptions of ADS' contribution-compensation mechanism were also found to be inadequate, and perception deviation was a factor that caused differences in perceptions of the importance of ADS-related literacy.

Second, after analyzing the network of 27 ADS media-related issues, the network cluster was divided into five major groups: (1) low perception and technology dependence, (2) consumption diversity and expectations, (3) algorithmic transparency and bias concerns, (4) positive continuous use, and (5) public regulation and social responsibility. The content is one of them. The center of the network was found to have information consumption diversity, while the center of the other side had confirmation bias, side effects, and algorithmic transparency. Based on the findings of the analysis, this study discussed implications by connecting ADS media-related issues with literacy education from the perspective of the user.

Submission ID

1328

The interaction between digital capital and economic, cultural, political, social, and personal background

Authors

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Abstract

The role played by socio-cultural and economic backgrounds in influencing digital inequalities has attracted the attention of scholars since the very beginning of Internet studies (Di Maggio et al., 2001). Researchers have increasingly explored the relationship between digital and social inequalities by showing some interdependencies between the pre-existing backgrounds of individuals and their related degree of digital skills and experience in using the Internet (Blank and Groselj, 2015; van Deursen et al., 2015). The main contribution of this paper is to conceptualise and measure how various components of individuals' everyday lives (economic, social, cultural, personal, and political components) contribute to the creation of digital capital (Ragnedda 2018, Ragnedda and Ruiu 2020). Our research builds on previous studies that have shown how individual backgrounds and the context in which people grow up influence how individuals approach (Gui and Argentin, 2011), use (van Deursen and van Dijk, 2014), and engage (Robinson 2009) with digital technologies. More specifically, our research aims to analyse to what extent individual backgrounds influence the increase of digital capital, by following the path of other studies that underlined a connection between the cultural, social and economic background of users and their

Internet access and use (Helsper, 2012; Van Deursen et al., 2014; van Deursen and van Dijk, 2015). Adding to these studies, this work contributes to the investigation of the interaction between social (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1995), political (Syed and Whiteley, 1997), economic (Bourdieu, 1985), personal (Becker, 1996) cultural (Bourdieu, 1985) and digital capital.

Submission ID

1331

The Digital Divide and Digital Capital: A Field Study of Smartphone Use among Chinese Seniors

Authors

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Abstract

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, there are now more than 260 million people over 60 years old in China, accounting for 18.7% of the total population. How older people use the ever-changing information and communication technologies is an important and urgent question to be answered. Although the concept of digital divide is often used to explain the difference in cell phone usage between the elderly and the young. However, older people in China are not all digital refugees, but show a very different state of use. Whether at the level of access, use or effect, this problem cannot be explained simply by urban-rural differences, age differences, and wealth differences. This study attempts to answer the question of **what causes the current state of inequality in smartphone use among older people in China and how it is formed.**

Giving some facts, the author argue that Bourdieu's concept of capital can give an explanation at the intersection of social stratification and digital inequality. My study focuses on explaining how the use of digital technology becomes digital capital and understanding how traditional forms of economic, cultural and social capital are transformed into digital capital and the reverse process by which digital capital is re-transformed into economic, cultural and social capital. The answer to this question may give us more insight into whether ICTs, represented by smartphones, have a reproducing or even exacerbating effect on social inequality, or whether the taming of new technologies by older people can be counterproductive to the social structures in which they live.

This study was planned to use a fieldwork research method and is already being implemented. The LS district of the eastern coastal city TT in China was selected as the field study site. This area is densely populated (total population of 502,000, of which 20% are over 60 years old) and has both urban and rural production methods, as well as urban residents, rural residents, and urban-rural residents. The fieldwork has been conducted for 5 months now and is planned for 10 months. During the fieldwork period, the author has successfully entered two villages and two urban communities to conduct observations and interviews, using the local University of the Aged (UOA) and community organizations as a backbone. About 40 in-depth interviews and three focus group interviews with eight people have been completed. The interview questions focus on the purpose, effects and difficulties of smartphone use among the elderly and their daily lives. The author also conducted workshops to popularize smartphone use in rural communities, taking an activist approach to delve into the process of smartphone use among older adults.

This study will eventually model the interconversion of the four types of capital based on an updated concept of digital capital. Digital capital will become an important indicator of an internal distinction between classes of older people.

Key words: Smartphone; Aging digital divide; Digital capital; China; Field study

Submission ID

1359

Out of Order: The Digital Divide and the Repair of a Precarious World

Authors

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Abstract

This paper continues a consideration of the digital divide that centers notions of precarity and instability to shape understanding of why the divide persists despite decades of scholarly and policy attention to the matter. These considerations are made against the contemporary background of disruption—the intentional, glamorized disruptions of the high-tech, globalized economy and the unexpected disruptions of a global pandemic.

It draws on the literature on repair and maintenance to center the inevitability of disconnection, rather than the hope of connection, in how we conceptualize and address the digital

divide. The growing body of scholarship on repair, technology maintenance, and the broken world (Graham & Thrift, 2007; Jackson, 2014; Rosner & Ames, 2014; Gonzales, 2016; Gonzales et al, 2020; Crosby & Stein, 2020) pays close attention to the lifecycle, lifespan, and multiple points of failure in built systems and infrastructures. These theories frame the world as fragile and take precarity and instability as the normal conditions with which human initiatives must always grapple.

This paper proposes that theories of repair, technology maintenance, and the broken world offer insight into the persistence of the digital divide and for why initiatives to address the problem may fall short. Understanding of the divide should be shaped by harsh reality—everything built eventually breaks—and not by hopes of a seamless techno-optimistic future. Digital connection is the goal but also the aberrant state. Connection is the disruption. The image that most accurately defines the world is the “out of order” sign.

Notions of precarity and repair reposition resilience, upkeep, and care as essential components of technological and media systems. These notions redirect our attention to the human and material elements of systems generally understood as virtual and immaterial. We can more easily recognize and remember the human labor embedded in sustainability and successful infrastructure.

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Submission ID

1392

Digital Media Literacy Skill of Youth: Comparison of rural and urban undergraduate students of Pakistan

Authors

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Abstract

The COVID has changed the ways economies work and generate revenue especially in developing countries i.e. Pakistan. Where the youth entrepreneurial and employment rate is comparatively slower to other developing countries due to poor internet access and inadequate digital skills. Despite the government's attempts to make new technology more available and affordable, one might wonder how using and understanding digital media is still a hurdle for some young people in this world. Despite the availability of numerous media literacy scales and studies to understand the skills of youth, there seems to be a gap in the availability of empirical data in Pakistan.

Media literacy is not part of the curriculum in Pakistan. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand the digital media literacy of young people i.e. how young people access and understand the digital media and how they use to communicate with it. For this research, the researchers plan to compare the abilities of rural and urban undergraduate students. The preliminary analysis suggest that it is difficult for rural population to make sense of a survey based questionnaire. Therefore, the study plans to use focus group as the methodology of study to understand things better. For this study, a convenient sample of six students will be taken from both rural and urban institutes. Young adults from age 18 – 22 will be taken for this study.

In the initial stage, the students will be asked to about the basic demographics and will be asked questions and will be given tasks to evaluate of their media literacy skills. Next, they will be asked to share their understanding of media literacy and the hurdles in access, analysing and communicating with digital media. So far, the observation states that rural pupils sometimes face barriers to physical access or lack proper skills that may point toward

digital divide research. However, final results will help understand things better. The study will be helpful in creating a valid and reliable scale to identify media literacy scale for a different and diverse population. Moreover, a proper curriculum can be designed keeping in view the weak areas of young people.

Submission ID

1418

A study on digital inequalities in a multicultural state of Manipur in India

Authors

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Abstract

Digital media literacy has increasingly become a prerequisite globally. It has also driven a pursuit for the enhancement of digital access, skills, and benefits of using ICTs across the globe. In turn, the digital divide in patterns of usage and deliverance can be noticed in cultural and ethnic groups big and small impacting society and culture. Knowledge and meanings on the concept of self and the world keep evolving over time impacting people's perception of identity, language, and culture. Societies big and small are thriving despite the challenges of digitalisation. These challenges to the multicultural context faced in the digitalisation process are universal and can no longer be ignored. Digital today connects us as a global village and so, ignoring the challenges and risks of digital inequalities can have long-term impacts on overall growth and development locally and globally.

The paper aims to study the impact of digital gaps in intracultural and intercultural encounters experienced in Manipur. Manipur is a model state in Prime Minister Modi's Digital India initiative to strengthen e-governance. Manipur has been awarded the Best Performing State in North-East India in eProcurement for the financial year 2017-18. Also, the compulsion to increase digital media users during the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual state of Manipur makes it a compelling selection for the study. In a population of about 2.8 million, several ethnic groups speaking the Tibeto-Burman language groups inhabit the state with the Meitei or Manipuri language being the dominant group and, along with English the dominant language used in the state.

More than 30 other tribes fall within the Naga or the Kuki tribes, which constitute the next bigger ethnic groups in the state. Situated in the easternmost part of India, Manipur shares an international boundary with Myanmar and is close to the borders of Bangladesh, China, and Bhutan. Its location along with its social, economic, and demographic features are vital to understanding intercultural encounters in all quarters including the digital space of the people in the state. Intercultural and intracultural communications that function within ethnic groups in changing times have an influence on culture and social change. With the use of a social constructivist perspective, the role and relevance of digital media and the acknowledging of the digital divide amidst the positive impacts of the medium will help understand social change and newer spaces in which individual construct their reality within their culture and culture at large.

Submission ID

1419

Digitalization and Mediatization of Older People's Education in the Post-Pandemic Era: A Survey on Online Courses in Elderly Universities in Ningbo, China

Authors

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Abstract

According to data from the 7th National Census of China in 2021, the population aged 60 and above now accounts for 18.70% of the country's population, further deepening the aging of the population and leaving the elderly service system in need of construction and improvement. At the same time, there is further improvement of digitalization in China. By June 2021, the number of Internet users in China has reached 1.011 billion, with an Internet penetration rate of 71.6% (CNNIC, 2021). With the widespread of electronic devices in everyday life, the digital divide is gradually deepening and the elderly may become "digital refugees" or even "digital outcasts" (Zhou, 2015). At this time, the education offered by elderly universities provides platforms and opportunities for the elderly to adapt to the digital society. In the past two years, the COVID-19 epidemic has led to a shift in the way elderly

universities deliver education, online teaching has become the main way. This provides an opportunity for this study to be carried out.

This study seeks to analyze the impact of the digitalization and mediatization of education on bridging the digital divide, and to explore the interaction process between the elderly in the digitalization of older people's education process and the school authorities who help the elderly to access the digital society. The study includes how the curriculum of elderly universities has changed during the epidemic, what impact has the online teaching had on the elderly learners and the school, and how the media has reconfigured the field within the education field in this context.

Under the dual consideration of aging and digitalization, Ningbo, China, was chosen as the location for this study. From January 2020 to March 2021, offline classes were replaced by online classes in elderly universities in Ningbo. From April 2021 onwards, the teaching model has become "online + offline". The sample was systematically chosen based on China's administrative division system, four elderly universities were selected as the research subjects. The research adopts a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, using field investigation, questionnaire survey and semi-structured interview, and adopts different research methods for different research objects.

After preliminary investigation, it was found that older people's education in the post-epidemic era presents the dual characteristics of digitalization and mediatization. On the one hand, in order to help the elderly integrate into the digital society, elderly universities have actively offered courses on teaching with smart devices during the epidemic, with a digital trend in older people's education. On the other hand, online teaching provides a space for students to communicate and maintain their relationships, reshaping the interaction between senior universities, senior students and social media, and highlighting the mediated character of education. There are also certain difficulties with online teaching, which has caused some troubles to both the elderly students and the school authorities. The study will also provide recommendations for the further development of older people's education and suggest more practical strategies for the elderly to access the digital society.

Submission ID

1521

The Influence of Internet Usage Frequency and Social Network on the Subjective Well-Being : An Empirical Study based on CGSS 2017

Authors

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Abstract

Purpose— As a transformative force promoting social restructuring (Castells, 2010), does the Internet also contribute to individual subjective well-being(SWB) ? There is a continuous debate regarding the relationship between media exposure and well-being (Bao *et al.*, 2019; Wheatley & Buglass, 2019; Castellacci & Tveito, 2018), but the specific results are dependent on how Internet use and subjective well-being are defined and operationalized (Büchi, 2021). Also, previous research was conducted in affluent countries (Keipi, 2018); however, the usage of media technology may have different consequences in developing countries (Kushlev, 2018; Greyling, 2018). Besides, the relationship between Internet use and subjective well-being relies heavily on a sample of adolescents and young adults (Verduyn *et al.*, 2017), but the Internet has gradually spread and researchers should support a broader sample of participants. The issue of how people use the Internet and who uses it cannot be overlooked (Kross *et al.*, 2021). In the context of China, this study examines the impact of Internet use behaviors on SWB to explore the significance of digital society for individuals.

Methodology— This study uses data derived from the 2017 Chinese General Social Survey(CGSS, 2021) (N = 2079). We involve the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model to test the stated hypotheses. Stata 17 is used for analyses.

Findings—The results present positive associations between the frequency of Internet use ($\beta = 0.044$, SE = 0.018, $p < 0.05$), social network size ($\beta = 0.032$, SE = 0.015, $p < 0.05$), respondents' social network centrality ($\beta = 0.016$, SE = 0.006, $p < 0.01$) and SWB.

According to control variables, age is associated with strongly negative effects ($\beta = -0.060$, SE = 0.008, $p < 0.001$); there is also a non-linear negative effect of age on SWB. Education and income indicate a weak positive effect. Being married is associated with significantly higher SWB ($\beta = 0.418$, SE = 0.048, $p < 0.001$).

Life satisfaction is used as a substitute variable. The ordered probit model is also used to test the robustness. They exhibit similar regression results and consistent sign directions.

Heterogeneity analysis reveals frequency of Internet use ($\beta = 0.063$, $SE = 0.026$, $p < 0.05$) and the social network size ($\beta = 0.043$, $SE = 0.025$, $p < 0.1$) show significant positive relationship with SWB for middle-aged respondents. Respondents' social network centrality has a significant relationship with SWB for young person ($\beta = 0.015$, $SE = 0.007$, $p < 0.05$) and older adults ($\beta = 0.020$, $SE = 0.012$, $p < 0.10$).

Conclusion— The results confirm a significant, stable relationship between Internet use and SWB. Moreover, this study creatively identifies that the impact of Internet use on SWB varies significantly among different age groups. These findings have practical implications, for example, applications designed for health promotion should impel middle-aged people to stay focused; digital literacy courses should encourage the elderly to be coordinators in online communication.

Submission ID

1697

Care home residents' digital repertoires during pandemic times: Inequalities and shared digital responsibilities

Authors

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Abstract

Many care home residents started using online communication tools for the first time during the pandemic. Infection prevention measures around the world brought about visitation restrictions at care homes, and residents have been cut off from their closest family members for months at a time (Nash, Harris, Heller, & Mitchell, 2021; O'Caomh et al., 2020; Van der Roest et al., 2020). In response, many care homes have facilitated video call meetings between residents and their family members. In addition, residents have purchased their own tablets, smartphones, or laptops to connect independently with family, friends, and community groups. These new digital practices have brought about new roles and responsibilities for device management and technology support.

This paper considers care home residents' lived experiences of negotiating online communication during the pandemic. The research aims to build an understanding of the digital

inequalities and shared responsibilities that have arisen alongside the new digital dependencies in care settings. A growing body of studies reports on family-resident video calls during the pandemic (Gallo Marin et al., 2020; Lightfoot et al., 2021; Verbeek et al., 2020), where much of this research concerns the perspectives of family members or staff. In general, there have been very few studies that consider care home residents' standpoints on their everyday uses of communication technologies (Wagner, 2022).

Initial results will be presented from interviews with an expected 15+ residents at three long-term care sites in British Columbia, Canada that will be conducted by phone or video call in spring 2022. The interviews take place after a 2-year period of full or partial restriction on visitation during which residents increasingly relied on digital technologies, and video calling apps in particular, to maintain relationships outside the care home. The interview method combines narrative inquiry (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2007) with communicative ecology mapping (Hearn, Tacchi, Foth, & Lennie, 2009) and is designed to stimulate collaborative reflection on participants' experiences of digital inclusion/exclusion.

Studies about the digital literacies of older adults show that family members often play the role of the 'warm expert' and provide support with device set up and management (Fernández-Ardèvol, 2013; Martínez & Olsson, 2022). In effect, older adults' digital repertoires can be interdependent with the digital skills of family members (Hänninen, Pajula, Korpela, & Taipale, 2021). In care settings, older adults' digital practices are positioned within a wider organizational context that both provides for and restricts their uses of communication technologies. Limitations on residents' meaningful use of digital technologies can result from fixed daily routines, the extent of Wi-Fi reach, or the lack of 'warm' support with devices. The effective use of communication technologies in care homes is not only about digital training but also about ongoing support with technology use (Wagner, 2022). Findings are expected to elaborate how organizational policies, practices, and built environments can underpin care home residents' digital frustrations and exclusions. As care home residents' social lives become increasingly digitalized, this paper will draw attention to the shared digital responsibilities that arise in institutional settings.

Submission ID

1852

Digitally active older adults talk technology: motivations, barriers, and ageism.

Authors

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Abstract

Older adults are a growing segment of the worldwide population and there are many challenges foreseen related to old age, such as more demand for (at-home) care and public health services. Digital technology is seen as a way to address some of these challenges (Doyle et al., 2019; Neves et al., 2018; Pekkarinen et al., 2020). However, many of these solutions require a minimum of digital skills and older adults have been recognized as a vulnerable under researched population regarding digital skill acquirement (Rosales & Fernández-Ardèvol, 2020). The older adults' population is heterogeneous in their interests and experiences. For this reason, it is essential to obtain insight in the motivations and observations of those older adults who would identify as digitally skilled to understand the possible barriers and challenges they encounter(ed) in their skill acquirement and what motivates them to maintain their level of digitally skills.

We conducted a series of in-depth semi structured interviews via digital platforms with 37 people aged 65 or older. They answered questions regarding their experiences with internet and digital technology. A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was initially performed on 12 interviews, the created thematic coding framework was then iteratively applied to the rest of the data set. The findings show that digitally active older adults often have an intrinsic or historic interest in obtaining and retaining digital skills. Furthermore, inter-generational contact and external pressures are motivations to remain active online. The participants tend to place themselves apart from those of their age cohort who are less digital and express a sense of pity towards them. The results show that although ageism, discrimination based on age, is never mentioned explicitly as a barrier or motivation by the participants themselves, different forms of ageism do contribute to a fear of falling behind on digital technology or towards the negative perception of old age. There is especially a fear of losing cognitive ability that seems to be closely linked to ageist expressions towards other less-digitally old.

Submission ID

2191

Digital Divide Between Urban and Rural Areas in Tanzania

Authors

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Abstract

Digital Divide Between Urban and Rural Areas in Tanzania

Keywords: *digital divide, digital inequalities, rural and urban divide, Tanzania*

Over the years, the digital divide between urban and rural areas in Tanzania has become very problematic. Out of the 65.5% of the population that lives in rural areas (The World Bank, 2019), only 14% has access to the Internet. When we compare to urban areas, where 34.5% of the population lives, 55.6% has Internet access (Mothobi et al., 2018). Not only access is important to understand the gap between both areas, also the digital skills as well as the outcomes are crucial (Hargittai, 2002; Van Dijk, 2017). In Tanzania, only 25% of the population has active Internet users. In terms of outcomes, the most important fields where ICT has played an important role are in the agricultural field and mobile money.

The research question we formulated in this research is the following: *What are the reasons for the digital divide between rural and urban areas in Tanzania?* The sub questions are the following:

1. Is the digital divide embedded within infrastructural issues?
2. Is the digital divide the result of governmental/political decisions?
3. To what extent are inequalities present between the demographic categories?
4. Which sociodemographic population groups are the most disadvantaged?

Based on an extensive analysis of scientific literature, the following concepts digital divide, digital inequality, and urban-rural divide, were explored. Subsequently, the three concepts were empirically studied and applied to the context of Tanzania. Expert interviews (N=7)

were conducted with policy makers and scientists stemming from Tanzania. The results show that the reasons for the digital divide between urban and rural areas in Tanzania, are firstly, due to the differences in income between both areas. Citizens in urban areas have a higher income, meaning they can afford computers, mobile phones and tablets. Secondly, the infrastructure in rural areas is problematic. Investments in rural areas are much lower; consequently, access to ICT facilities and the Internet is more difficult in rural areas. Thirdly, the issue of national priorities is at play, as the Government is less likely to invest in rural areas, because the latter are less viable. Fourthly, the level of education and hence, (digital) literacy is much lower in rural areas. Fifthly, experts also recognized awareness and relevance to be an issue. People in the rural areas tend to not be interested in using ICTs, because they do not see the importance of them. Urban areas have more access to relevant services, such as mobile money, health services, online shopping etc. Therefore, citizens in rural areas do not want to waste their available mobile data on services. Finally, the last reason given by experts is the fact that people in rural areas do not have as much free time as people living in urban areas.

Submission ID

2207

Social capital and Internet entertainment consumption habits of university students in Mexico City in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Authors

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Abstract

In the second decade of the twenty-first century, we are participants in a technological-digital revolution where social relations are redefined by the presence of the Internet, which presents itself as a new techno-social space for cultural production, collaboration, participation, The relationship and social interaction and in recent times for the construction of social capital.

The Social Capital is a concept that in recent years has aroused much interest in the academic field, linked not only with economics and politics, but also with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The current pandemic has forced a substantial change in the activities and habits of citizens around the world. One of the biggest challenges citizens faces is finding new ways to manage their leisure time, which is why during confinement there was a significant increase in the consumption of audiovisual content on streaming platforms such as Netflix or Amazon Prime and videogames. Social networks also allow people to establish processes of social interaction at various levels and forms. The success of digital entertainment is due to content being available when consumers need it and targeting a diverse audience. In addition, the current consumption of digital content is accompanied by spaces on social networks for discussion in communities, which provide knowledge so that the content acquires more value, with which new fans are supported to follow up on the digital content, generating social capital for the community.

In this way, we present the evolution and construction of the Internet from its origins to the present day, based on the proposals made by Pierre Bourdieu, James S. Coleman and Robert Putnam, on Social Capital.

Subsequently, a Focus Group was held with university students from public and private Higher Education Institutions in Mexico City: UNAM, IPN, ANÁHUAC MÉXICO (NORTH AND SOUTH) and ITESM to investigate how they used leisure time in the pandemic, placing special emphasis on the social capital that was generated in the discussion of content on social networks.

Submission ID

2277

Digital footprints lead to crossroads: Emerging cultural shifts in a digitised rural society.

Authors

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Abstract

This paper explores the connections between access to media technology, digital literacy and its impact on ethnographic culture of communities in Eastern Uttar Pradesh (India).

While current historiography primarily credits the access of digital media to the economic and political growth of communities, an investigation of folk forms in eastern Uttar Pradesh reveals a reoccurring connection between erosion of folk culture and dissipating collective imagination in a rural society. With the convergence of technology and creativity, multiple studies show wider and deeper consumption of entertainment on digital platforms, what it has failed to reveal erosion of folk narrative which historically acted as a glue to social cohesion in rural hinterland of India. The digital divide been widely researched, and has attracted much debate and speculation for its economic, social and political consequences but this paper reveals that tectonic shifts in aesthetic and cultural norms in communities especially in rural India.

Secondary literature occasionally reflects the importance of local and ethnographic culture sources for the preservation of social structures, yet these works still emphasise the importance of new digital media platforms and its access to new opportunities, education and mobility. This study reveals, on one side the gap that exists between those who have access to ICTs and those who do not, it also delineates dilution of traditional norms and practices. These in turn anecdotally point to emergence of exclusion, social disintegration and skewed narrative in hinterland communities. As an investigational framework, a comparative study of norms, practices and messages in form of detailed in depth personal interviews where was implemented.

The present paper argues that while increase in access to digital media in particular and ICT in general is important, its impact needs to be understood in a larger context of social capital and collective cohesion. To that end, this paper has a deeper relevance for Indian social development and how erstwhile media dark areas have woken up to digital landscape and its freewheeling impact.

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2388

Are the basic human rights of people still guaranteed in a digital society?

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Abstract

We increasingly live in a digital society. We use digital technologies in order to learn, to work, to communicate, to consume and to socialize. Covid-19 has dramatically intensified this process. Teams and Zoom meetings have steadily become the norm. Part-time teleworking has become broadly accepted. The online market sector has exploded. From online banking services to Covid Safe Certificates, many administrative tasks, and documents, have increasingly moved online. Both governments and companies have shifted to a digital-first or even digital-only philosophy in service design and delivery (Agostino et al., 2021).

In this new reality, being digitally excluded largely means being socially, administratively, and economically excluded (King Baudouin Foundation, 2021). Yet many people still do not have access to the digital world or lack the skills and competencies to navigate the many online platforms and service offerings (Asmar et al., 2020). Social actors representing vulnerable groups in society, such as people in poverty, the elderly, people with disabilities, request to treat the right to access (and use) of the Internet as a basic human right.

Therefore, this study focuses on how we make sure that all citizens get access to digital technology and are able to use digital services to their own benefit and no one is left behind? The study is based upon a two-folded approach: How digital is the societal norm that is put forward in Belgium in the different life domains and how does this affect the human rights of citizens? How digital is the personal norm of Belgian citizens, how was this influenced, positively and negatively, by the COVID-19 crisis and how does this impact the use of digital public and private services?

This research entails 1) a theoretical exploration of academic literature regarding digital exclusion and inclusion and the connection to human rights, 2) a quick-scan analysis, followed by several case studies of the extent to which primary services connected to the different human rights of citizens are digitalized, 3) a qualitative study on whether the human rights of Belgian citizens are still guaranteed while using public and private services. This research should result in strategy development with regards to the acknowledgement of access to the Internet and ICT as a basic human right and the digitalization of primary services in collaboration with the different stakeholders. Specific recommendations will be made in order to improve the inclusive character of primary digital services that are needed to guarantee the human rights of Belgian citizens.

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2439

Contextualizing Southern Indian Rural Digital Divide: The complex play of ethnicity and gender

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Abstract

Neo-globalized rendition of digitization has in a way produced several strata of users, further mystifying the perhaps imaginative yet theorized space of digital natives. One such strata, this research explores pertains to rural girls, who are arguably digital natives from one standpoint, yet have huge access and usability constraints. These pockets of rural girls, render very different contextualized understanding of digital literacy, digital divide and social media literacy. Ever since Information and Communication Technologies evolved, it has produced a familiar digital divide rhetoric. This however, day by day is getting exacerbated between and within countries; between and within States as well as cities, even villages. In developing countries, girls and women struggle to afford technology and internet access. Tamilnadu, the Southern state in India is no exception.

The digital inequalities drive a systemic gendered digital divide. There are various underlying factors such as affordability, accessibility, usability, ethnicity and gender stereotyping to name a few. Rani et al (2020) argued that social inequalities are increasing after the rapid penetration, acceptance and use of various digital media in India. Gladkova et al. (2020) illustrates that ethnicity plays a major role in defining the digital capital. However, in rural zones, gendered ethnicity norms creates a very unique cluster of digital natives, who are part of the digital world, yet that are an inconspicuous and volatile cluster. Explicating such complexities, requires grassroot level research - a strength this work consciously demonstrates, attempting to contribute to the mystifying assumption of digital natives, by bringing in the rural gendered lens of privilege, access and familial institutionalization of patriarchy.

The post-pandemic times, has also brought in a homogenized need to learning through a gadget enabled digital environment. Such massive overpowering dependency on techno-

learning platforms has worryingly excluded many girls, who ironically are believed to be digital natives. Such instances, need to be documented and needs a structured deliberation.

Concrete policy considerations are hence essential and pivotal to foster women or girls' inclusion in the digital economy, while at the same time factoring in the stereotypes and social norms that leads to discrimination against women, as well as their exclusion (OECD, 2018). Such a research expedition, addressing the gendered digital divide requires sufficient awareness among the parents and challenges in tackling gender stereotypes and hence, this study employs a dual research design integrating the spirit of applied research and experimental ethnography within two villages in the Thiruvarur district of Tamilnadu. This effort, contextualizing Southern Indian Rural Digital Divide attempts to situate, dissect and explain the complex play of ethnicity and gender.

Submission ID

2448

New Cracks or Bridges : the Impact of Information Divide on Chinese Generation Gap made by TikTok's Algorithm

Authors

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Abstract

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, increasing people feed themselves Tik Tok in their daily life. According to statistics, Tik Tok is targeting 680 million daily active users in China by 2021, whose age distribution ranges from 16 to 60 years old in China. Are people of different age levels recommended the same type of video? And whether this has widened or narrowed the gap between them?

As early as 1970, the American communication scientist P.J.Tichenor introduced the famous *Knowledge Gap Theory*. The basic idea of this hypothesis is that in a modern information society, "since people of higher socioeconomic status can usually access and use information faster and more effectively than people of lower socioeconomic status. The more information is transmitted by the mass media, the greater the information gap and knowledge gap between the two and the knowledge gap between the two tends to widen".

Information divide is a new concept in contemporary information sociology, which refers to the phenomenon of social differentiation due to the rapid development and effective application of information technology, resulting in the widening of the information gap and disparity between different subjects of information activities in human society.

With its unique algorithm mechanism, Tik Tok recommends personalized content to different users, thus forming information divide in different circles. People in the same circle tend to have common Internet memories which promotes their communication.

The current research tried to explore whether the algorithm can exacerbate the intergenerational gap from a sociological perspective. According to *Knowledge Gap Theory*, I have selected Tik Tok college users and older users in China as my main subjects, using logistic model and sample survey. On one hand, I investigated whether Tik Tok's algorithm is influenced by generation; On the other hand, I assumed the information divide created by algorithm give new barriers to intergenerational communication and verified it by in-depth interviews and household researches between the most active users of different ages.

In conclusion, although a small number of old users got new common with youngsters from short videos, under overall data, Tik Tok's algorithm is partly influenced by generation gap and then exacerbate it by new Internet memories, which means information divide made by algorithms has a negative impact on generation gap in China.

This article verified the applicability of "Knowledge Gap Theory " in the algorithm age, and focused on a new concept—information divide, offering a new perspective of digital challenges in the era of neo-globalisation and attempting to give some suggestions.

Submission ID

2534

Digital inclusion in rural areas: The landscape of disconnection in Guanajuato, Mexico

Authors

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Abstract

This paper explores the geographies of digital inclusion/exclusion in rural areas of Guanajuato, Mexico, following up on a previous study on digital inclusion in Aguascalientes, Guanajuato and Jalisco, in which we identified the disadvantage of Guanajuato compared to these neighbouring states. Guanajuato is a Mexican state with serious inequalities. While the industrial corridor municipalities enjoy significant technological and economic development, there are peripheral zones with serious social problems. These inequalities are exacerbated in rural areas.

The theoretical framework of this study connects digital inclusion and internet geographies perspectives (Blank, Graham & Calvino, 2018; Chaparro Mendivelso, 2017; Graham, 2008; Helsper & Reisdorf, 2017; Pick & Sarkar, 2015; Trappel, 2019; Warf, 2021), to focus the socio-spatial dimension of access and uses of the internet in rural areas.

The methodology includes quantitative and qualitative elements. First, we worked on secondary data analysis, particularly on official data on internet access (users and households), and the social gap index. After that, we will work on questionnaires and rapid ethnographies in selected rural communities (Brown-Johnson, Shaw, Safeinili, Chan, Mahoney, Asch & Winget, 2018; Couper, 2017), in order to know the socio-spatial conditions in these communities.

The preliminary findings correspond to the first phase. In this line, Guanajuato has internet access levels below the national average. According to data from the 2020 Population and Housing Census (INEGI, 2021), 51.98% of Mexican households have internet at home, while in Guanajuato it drops to 48.18%. In 39 of the 46 municipalities, the level of access is even lower, with Ocampo (17.67%), San Felipe (23.58%), Coroneo (24.16%), San Diego de la Union (24.90%) and Santa Catarina (25.81%) having the least access.

With regard to cell phones, 87.38% of Mexican households have at least one. The state of Guanajuato is slightly below, registering 87.09%. The municipalities with the lowest access to cellular telephony in households are: Atarjea (56.55%), Xichú (61.18%) and Victoria (66.35%).

Low levels of digital inclusion are often associated with social inequalities. The Coneval Social Gap Index (2020) was consulted, which presents data at state and municipal level, based on indicators on education, access to health services, basic services, housing quality and space. The municipalities with the most severe levels in this Index are: Atarjea (0.816765), Xichú (0.447920) and Tierra Blanca (0.325468), which correspond to the medium degree of social backwardness according to Coneval; as well as Victoria (0.091415), Santa Catarina (-0.003255), San Diego de la Unión (-0.144878), Comonfort (-0.205953), Jerécuaro (-0.247495) and San Felipe (-0.253882), which correspond to the low degree.

These digital exclusion problems are not limited to access to technology, but articulates concerns about inequalities, which affect the population's possibilities to exercise human rights, such as education, health, employment, access to information and freedom of expression.

Submission ID

2551

Digital competencies and social mobility in the context of young content producers born in low-income families in Brazil

Authors

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Abstract

The article aims to understand how the work of young creators of digital content belonging to low-income families in Brazil is articulated with dynamics of identity construction, visibility and social mobility. Brazil is one of the countries with the highest concentration of income and social inequality in the world, with a very low rate of social mobility. With the economic rise of groups at the base of the pyramid, especially during the two President Lula governments (2003-2010), there has been an observable increase in the level of schooling of children from popular families, including the emergence, in many cases, of the first generation of members with access to university. The same family environments started to be shared by people with significant differences in terms of their educational experiences and their cultural, social and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). In this scenario, calls attention the appearance of online content creators - or "digital influencers" (Abdin, 2015), native term - from low-income groups, which dominate higher digital competencies than their ancestors, emphasize in their actions on digital platforms issues related to their place in the class structure and the search for social ascension. The research is based on a case analysis of the profile @blogueiradebaixrenda, belonging to a young Brazilian creator of digital content with a strong presence on Instagram and Youtube. The field procedure adopted was online observation, a particular modality of observational research (Flick, 2009) conducted in the digital environment, accompanying social dynamics on the online platforms without interacting with users. The @blogueiradebaixrenda's profile initially emphasizes her "poor condition," which has a social and physical "place" – the *favela* –, idiosyncrasies and behaviours; in sum, particularities to be recognized. On another

level, though, a call is made to leave behind the “fatalism” of poverty in favour of the fight for social mobility. Through this case, it is possible to discuss new paths of mobility in Brazilian society that include the possession of certain digital competencies, that allow some individuals to become producers of digital content thematizing their class place and the possibility of social ascension. The article thus aims to contribute to the discussion on the issue of Internet accesses and uses in relation to the maintenance or reduction of social inequalities, discussed by authors such as Van Dijk (2005), Chen (2013) and Miller (2019), among many others.

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2622

Peer support and child norms: the impact of different social relationships on older adults' mobile social media use

Authors

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Abstract

Introduction

Currently, aging and digitalization are the two major social waves sweeping China. There is a growing number of older adults learning to adopt digital mobile technology. However, it is undeniable that the majority of seniors are still very unfamiliar with new media. So why are some seniors able to become surfers while others remain inaccessible to the web?

It is difficult for older adults with deteriorating cognitive abilities to learn many new and unseen skills on their own. Others' help and support are of great importance to them. Therefore, this study will use social support theory as one of the theoretical supports.

According to the convoy model, in addition to family members, peer groups such as friends and neighbors are also important components of older adults' social network, who can give them social support and have significant impacts on their minds and behavior.

Therefore, this study refines the TAM by introducing social support theory, and takes WeChat, which is currently popular among older adults in China, as the research object to investigate the factors that influence older adults' psychological and behavioral use of mobile social media. Meanwhile, comparing two important groups in older adults' social networks, their children and the peer, this study investigates the effects of different social relationships on older adults' mobile social media use.

R1: What are the social factors that influence mobile social media use among older adults?

R2: How do peers and children influence older adults' use of mobile social media differently?

H1 Perceived ease of use is positively correlated with older adults' intention to use mobile social media.

H2 Perceived usefulness is positively correlated with older adults' intention to use mobile social media.

H3 Perceived ease of use is positively correlated with perceived usefulness.

H4 Intention to use mobile social media is positively correlated with older adults' actual using.

H5 Older adults' trust in mobile social media is positively related to perceived ease of use.

H6 Older adults' trust is positively related to perceived usefulness.

H7 Older adults' trust is positively related to intention to use mobile social media.

H8 Older adults' trust is positively related to older adults' actual using.

H9 Social support is positively related to older adults' trust.

H10 Social support is positively related to older adults' perceived ease of use.

H11 Social support is positively related to older adults' perceived usefulness.

H12 Social support is positively correlated with older adults' intention to use social media.

H13 Social support is positively correlated with older adults' actual using.

H14 Social influence is positively related to older adults' trust.

H15 social influence is positively related to older adults' perceived ease of use.

H16 Social influence is positively related to older adults' perceived usefulness.

H17 Social influence is positively related to older adults' intention to use mobile social media.

Method

The researchers administered questionnaires to older adults aged 55 years or older in Shandong and Hebei from January to March 2021. A total of 357 valid questionnaires were collected and modeled with structural equations using AMOS. The seven variables involved in the study were adapted based on the classical scale.

Results

**H1,H2,H3,H4,H5,H8,H9,H10,H11,H13,H14,H15,H16,and H17 are supported.
H6,H7, and H12 are refused.**

First, this study found that social support and social influence are two major social factors affecting older adults' mobile social media use. Specifically, social support can directly influence older adults' trust in mobile social media, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and actual We-Chat use. Social influence can also directly influence older adults' trust in mobile social media, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies. It is worth noting that social support is important for digital inclusion of older adults, as it can directly predict actual usage.

Secondly, although children and peers, the two most important groups around older adults, can influence their perceptions and behavior of social media use, the action mechanisms are not identical.

Children exact inference in the form of social influence (subjective norms). In other words, children do not provide direct help, but rather assimilate and change older adults' perceptions and actions in a more subtle way through behavioral modeling and values output. This results in a norm-building effect.

Peers influence older adults' mobile social media use by providing support. Although children provide more support for older adults in terms of quantity and frequency, child support is ineffective, whereas peers are the effective supporters who influence older adults' mobile social media use.

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