Messengers and social networks are informal learning tools

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Abstract

This research shows that based on the quantitative data presented and the qualitative information obtained from different groups, the useful use of the Internet, messaging services and simple information services is related to informal learning. The purpose of this research is to investigate the digital ways of leisure and socialization of young people and their informal learning. The current method of statistical community research is sampling and virtual space tools, validation and final review and diagnostic analysis that examines messengers and social networks as informal learning tools, the findings are: the obtained data In the present study, general considerations about the Internet, instant messages, simple notification service and photography. The result is that learning takes place in informal contexts (mainly self-taught or with the help of relatives). And the allocation of these technologies is related to the needs and interests of teenagers. Therefore, the use of the Internet, especially messengers and social networks, revolves around daily and close social circles outside the family (friends) and has a suitable place for informal education.

Keywords: Learning, using the Internet, entertainment, learning tools

Introduction

Young people have become the privileged subject of study in reflecting the social and cultural effects of the use and consumption of information and communication technologies. They are the digital generation, the vanguards that represent the future, but they are also the most vulnerable group to the dangers posed by these technologies. Children and adolescents tend to be considered as a unique subject of study, as a homogeneous entity with the ability to adapt digital technologies in more innovative ways than adults [1],[2] The implicit metaphors in these approaches have led to theoretical categories such as digital [3], network generation [4]. digital generation (Rubio-Gil,2010) or interactive generation [5,6]. The other side is represented by "needy" youth who lack the necessary skills to make the most of these technologies [7]. In this sense, it is interesting to know how the tools used by young people become tools for social relations and identity management [8]. and how differences in Use can lead to digital divides [9].

problem statement

This paper provides a general context based on quantitative data and discusses qualitative information obtained from different groups about the actual use of the Internet, messaging services, and SNS (simple notification service).

The importance of the subject

The importance of this research is that it provides a general context based on quantitative data and discusses qualitative information obtained from different groups about the actual use of the Internet, messaging services and SNS (simple information service). In this way, people can engage in formal learning even in their spare time.

Research objectives and hypotheses

The purpose of the current research is to study the digital ways related to leisure time and sociability in the case of young people. This article provides a general context based on quantitative data and discusses qualitative information obtained from different groups about the actual use of the Internet, messaging services, and SNS[2].

Literature and history

In their research in 2009, Aranda and colleagues suggested that young people have become a privileged subject of study in reflecting the social and cultural effects of using and consuming information and communication technology. They are the digital generation, the vanguards who represent the future, but also the most vulnerable group to the dangers posed by these technologies. Children and adolescents tend to be considered as a unique subject of study, as a homogeneous entity with the ability to adapt digital technologies in more innovative ways than adults. Also, Balfrey and Gasser in 2008, as well as Prensky in 20011, did not suggest in their research that implicit metaphors in these approaches have led to theoretical categories such as digital and network production production Networked.

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[2] SNS - (Simple Notification Service)

In their research in 2033 AD, Selvin and his colleagues proposed that the digital generation or the interactive generation of the opposite party are shown by "needy" young people who lack the necessary skills to make the most of these technologies. From this point of view, it is interesting to know how the tools used They are used by young people as tools for social relations and identity management, and Nuten et al., 2009 have explained how there are differences in their use. and can lead to digital divides [10].

research method

The current method of statistical population research, sampling and virtual space tools, validation and final review and diagnostic analysis that examines messengers and social networks as informal learning tools, which is considered one of the practical methods. And also, the basic method is considered. Research tools include Windows Linux, Word 2021, Photo shop 2023, Adobe PDF 2021, Internet search engines, scientific sites in the media space.

Findings

The data obtained in the present study

The data obtained in the present study are both quantitative and qualitative. To obtain the quantitative data a telephone survey was conducted between 16 March and 1 April 2009with a sample of Spanish teenagers aged between 12 and 18 years old. All in all, the final the oretical sample added up to 2054 consultations with a margin of error of +2.16% for P = Q = 50.0% and under the supposition of maximum uncertainty. The number of consultations conducted follows a distribution that is proportional to the Spanish population in terms of both sex and age. Following this premise, 51.7% of the sample were male and48.3% female. Likewise, 53.9% of the young people were between 12 and 15 years old and 46.1% were between 16 and 18 years old. Additionally, these segmentations have been applied to be proportional to the size of each town and region (comunid adautónoma). The qualitative data were obtained by organizing a series of discussion groups in tended to thoroughly study the opinions of a group of young people. The groups were drawn from eight secondary schools, with eight youngsters of both sexes in each group selected according to the school heads' criteria. The sample of secondary schools was made applying several criteria: the centres had to be in four Spanish cities of four regions that had been chosen regarding their level of Internet penetration as established by two sources: EGM and INE The four regions selected were Catalonia and Madrid (high Internet penetration according to those sources) and Andalusia and Galicia (low penetration according to those same sources). Within the regions, the cities of Barcelona, MadridTarifa, Algeciras and Santiago de Compostela were selected, and

one or two public secondary schools were picked in each of them. Two groups were organized in each school, one with ESO students (up to 16 years old) and the other comprising bachillera to students (between 16 and 18 years old). The discussion groups were conducted between April and May 2009 [11].

The content of these group discussions was audio-recorded and supported only by video recording to further identify all the youth involved. All recordings were transcribed to be treated with the A T L A S. ti qualitative analysis support tool. Transcripts were coded in A T L A S. tibased on the criteria established by the researchers after the first reading of the transcribed material. To complement the accuracy level of these young people's comments, two levels of codes were created: primary and secondary. Primary codes were for mentions, statements, perceptions, or opinions about any of the following technologies: Internet, social networking, or instant messaging. Secondary codes were for mentions, statements, declarations, perceptions, or comments about any of the following aspects: competence, cooperation, sociability, risks, benefits, interest, control, privacy, school, creativity, and status. The codes were reciprocal. References are made to enable a full analysis of the participants' opinions regarding the technologies used and the specific applications of these technologies. To convey the opinions and comments of the participants while preserving their anonymity, an identification format has been adopted on the following pages, identifying the source with only three data: gender (boy/girl), age and city of residence.

General considerations about the Internet

The first relevant fact is that almost all Spanish students claim to have connected to the Internet during their lifetime (96.7%). In addition, most of them connect regularly (53% of them connect an average of one hour a day; it is also noteworthy that 13.6% of them claim to be online almost all the time).

In this context and in relation to the place, frequency and intensity of internet use by teenage boys and girls, as well as the effective parental control over this use, it is important to emphasize that the majority of teenagers (94.5%) connect to the internet mainly at home. 59.2% of them claim that they have a connection in their bedroom. Internet access in private or personal spaces increases with age (more among 16-18-year-olds than between

12 and 15 years old). The same happens in parallel with the time they dedicate to it, which is higher among the older teenagers interviewed, who also gradually migrate their main hours of use from the afternoon to the night or to connect at any time. All these data together indicate an established pattern of Internet use for adolescents in their families that becomes more flexible and diverse as they grow older,

essentially a natural development of ongoing inter-generational dynamics that often translate into discussions and negotiations about use and consumption. will be technology and media [11].

On the other hand, the data on how the Internet was introduced is very interesting. Among all users, 53.6% claim that they learned to use it by themselves, while 21.8% learned with the help of some relative (parents, uncles, brothers or sisters, cousins). Nevertheless, overall, the data show that most adolescents learn to use the Internet in informal contexts, either alone, with their family or with friends, and therefore in contexts unrelated to formal education (hardly 19.9 percent). interviewees claim). Learned in school or academies. In fact, what is clearly visible is that for teenagers, the Internet is a leisure space that is clearly separated from formal and daily educational contexts. The following extracts are examples of young people's responses to questions such as "Do you use the Internet to read or search for information?" and "Do they recommend web pages to you at this address? "your high school

✓ Girl, 14, Santiago de Compostela: [Pages] states that the educational material is not very interesting.

The researcher asks: Why?

"Because we don't have any fun, that's what we're looking for," says 14-year-old Santiago de Compostela.

Researcher: So you just use it for fun?

✓ Boy, 14, Santiago de Compostela: He says, you go somewhere and they teach you for six, eight hours, and then you go home and apparently you go on the Internet to have fun.

The comparison of the effective uses of the Internet with how it is perceived by young people reveals some fundamental characteristics related to how they introduce digital technologies into their daily lives. Although entertainment (95.1%) and information (80.2%) are still two of the main functions attributed to the Internet, so is participation ('The Internet allows me to share the pictures I take, the videos I make') (81.9%). None the less, in this respect, to 'share' particularly suggests that teenagers have highly integrated the Internet into their daily lives, as an online extension of their offline lives.

Instant messaging

It is noteworthy that 94.5% of teenagers that use the Internet have one or more email accounts; but only 4.6% use email as their main tool of online communication, whereas89.9% have one or more instant messaging accounts (Messenger, Skype, Jabber), which are the main tools for socialization and entertainment.

The characteristics of use of instant messaging accounts corroborate that the activity articulated through Internet tools and services is primarily

supported by friendship orinterest relationships [12]. Thus, the principal uses (of a lot) of the se accounts are to talk to friends (89.3%) and about what interests these young people or what they like (71.3%), which far exceed the uses involving relationships with people not related to their daily social circle, or to family or teachers (talk to people they do notoften see, 48.5%; talk to relatives, 36.7%; talk to teachers or monitors, 3.1%). This also exceeds practical uses, such as solving problems regarding their studies (44.2%). In terms of language, this communication that is clearly associated to sociability reveals some noteworthy strategies. Young people openly express certain preferences in communicating through the Messenger. Concision, for instance, to 'get to the point', is particularly highlighted. Monotonous conversations or conversational tags that are so prominent in interpersonal verbal communication are not regarded positively. It is OK to

say 'hello', but a conversation full of tags related to the phatic function of language is of

no interest to them at all:

Girl, 17, Barcelona:

I believe that in Messenger many people have created a kind of monotonous conversation, which is: Hi, hi, how are you? Fine and you, too, what can you tell me? Nothing, and you, me neither . . . Some conversations clearly don't take you anywhere . . . If we start with 'Hello', it won't really work.

In conversations with young people, it is clear that they concede a lot of importance to the exchange of sentences that might be thought to fulfil a clear referential function (that is to say, those containing relevant information) or an expressive function (icons or sentences reflecting specific states of mind), according the well-known model of the functions of language introduced by the Russian-American linguist Roman [13]. The fact that someone is available suffices to start a conversation, which is bound to be oriented to 'explain something interesting'. Thus, it is possible to claim the existence of something we could call an MSM Code, a code thatis built on technological competence and the cultural capital involved in the use of thetool [14].

Regarding this MSM Code, and in relation to the observations made by the different groups, a series of good communicative practices aiming at socializing through instant messaging can be detected. These practices include:

• It is better to give the Messenger contact than the telephone number. Instant messaging offers more options to manage availability to establish a conversation, andit is easier to ignore an unwanted conversation on Messenger than on the telephone. In other words, instant messaging offers more possibilities to avoid intrusions

• It is recommended to prepare a list of contacts. Some young people order their contact lists with tags such as "I don't know him", "High school", "Friends". Many others, though not doing this, find it a good strategy to accept many calls without losing control of the group they are most involved with.

• It is advisable to prepare automatic messages. An automatic message such as 'I'm having dinner' might fulfil a double function. On the one hand, it avoids thetension that might arise from the fact of having a lot of unanswered messagesafter being away from the computer for a more or less prolonged period of time.On the other hand, it does not interrupt communication, since itindicates to thecontacts that someone is away from the computer but is planning to come back atsome time.

• Do not say it if it is not better than silence. Young people value the exchange ofmessages with specific contents,messagesregarding useful information orexpressing opinions or states of mind.

SNSs and photologs

Regarding the level and type of contribution of young people to the construction of waysof participatory culture it is remarkable that 31.6% of theSpanish teenagers do not use SNSs, blogs or photologs. This information is particularlysignificant insofar as this kind of tools and services on the Internet are applications thatare precisely built around relations of friendship and/or interest and whose technical characteristics have a direct relation to the social and/or cultural competences on whichnew models of participatory and coll a borative culture are founded [15].

The most commonly used social networks are Tuenti (68.5% of SNSs users) andFotolog (18.4%), both exceeding Facebook (10.1%). On the other hand, the use ofblogs among teenagers in Spain is insignificant (only 0.4% of all Internet users withinthis population group). In this context, the reasons to use these tools and servicesamong young people reveal the importance of them with respect to their social life.Thus, the main uses (of a lot) of social networks in general are to talk to friends (79.5%of the users) and to look at what the contacts in their friends list are doing or talkingabout (66.6%).Beyond the importance of social networks, relationships of interest and participation (although not necessarily separated from friendships) are also fundamental. Another main reason why Spanish youth use social networks on the Internet is to talk about their interests (63.8%). commenting (61.2%), sending pictures, videos or texts made by themselves (59.8%) and sending/receiving funny pictures, videos or content on the Internet (59.5%). In the case of Fotolog, participation related to friendship relationships emerges as the most important function. Therefore, the personal reasons for using Fotolog, in order of …

importance, are to write or comment on Fotologsof friends (67.7%), to publish pictures, videos or texts made by oneself (59.8%), to communicate with friends (53.8 %) Is. Another significant aspect is related to the fear that adults express about the possibility of unwanted calls by teenagers through the Internet. With this in mind, it is important to note that only 32.9% of teenagers claim that their parents have imposed some kind of rule regarding the use of the Internet in general, although among these rules, restrictions on the type of people There is to access the Internet. In contact with the most important. On the other hand, a minority of 17.3 percent claim to have friends they only know online. In this context and considering that 63.7% of social network users frequently update their online profile information, it is necessary to pay attention to the most repetitive type of data in those profiles. Therefore, the most common are data that provide a more general description of the user (gender, age, photo, first and last name, in more than 90% of cases), than data that allow direct contact (messenger, e-mail or Fotolog address: at Below 40%; postal address, mobile phone number or home number: below 10%.

The different conversations among the teenager discussion groups ratify the dataobtained in the quantitative study: the social networks to which teenagers connect are mainly used to establish relationships with pre-existent offline groups of friends. Th eseonline relationships are used as an extension of their dailysociability and allow them to widen their social worlds beyond specific spatial limits. So, these users define social

networks as places where they can express themselves with a certain freedom about their problems, about daily situations affecting them individually or within a group.

For example:

o Girl, 14, Santiago de Compostela: It's like my personal diary, a way to vent [my feelings].
o Girl, 14, Santiago de Compostela: For everybody to read it, super personal.

Researcher: What do you upload?

o Girl, 14, Santiago de Compostela: What I do every day.
o Girl, 14, Santiago de Compostela: Yes, and if for example something happens and you can't

tell someone but you need to tell it, you put it there so the

people who understand just understand . . .

The more the contacts or friends are included, the greater is the chance for in teraction, and possibilities of acquiring sociability, support, information and feeling of belonging. Thus, being a member of one or another social network will mainly depend on the amount of contacts young people can add to their

profiles (contacts that, as previouslycommented, already exist in their offline daily life). The more contacts or friends, the greater the chance of interaction, and the possibility of gaining sociability, support, information, and a sense of belonging. Therefore, membership in one or another social network mainly depends on the number of young contacts. People can add to their profiles (contacts that, as mentioned earlier, already exist in their everyday offline life). The teenagers interviewed do not only connect to their network with the aim of contributing comments or information on their own or others' profiles, but often they use their contacts' profiles passively and as mere spectators. This attitude of being a spectator, whether in a group or individually, spends time looking at things and things.Prying into their friends' interjections and profile pictures is not an activity to be underestimated by associating it with mere gossip. Studies on gossip activity among women [16],or on television fan activity [17],It has been shown that gossip allows all participants to talk about themselves, their tastes, opinions, or values through a third person who appears in gossip magazines and television programs. By gossiping on SNS, teenagers do not waste time but exchange opinions, discuss tastes, views, and ways of thinking or doing things related to heir Identity [18].

By gossiping about their friends' profiles, teenagers work on aspects related to their social and cultural identity, without having to talk firsthand about values, tastes, attitudes, etc. Eliciting the actions of third parties Overall, active participation in SNSs as a gossiping activity shows that adolescents use these tools as social and emotional testing laboratories, mainly oriented towards entertainment. By using social networks, teenagers put part of their knowledge and mental states on the Internet, and as a result, they get more knowledge and social opportunities in return [19].

The results

Conclusion and discussion

This study confirms that the main way of introducing the use of digital technologies is the home/family environment, so that learning takes place in informal contexts (mainly self-taught or with the help of relatives). This research note deals with the characteristics of the allocation of these technologies in relation to the needs and interests of teenagers, so

their use of the Internet and especially social networks revolves around daily and close social circles outside of their family (friends). and classmates). This means that their high level of integration of these technologies in their daily life essentially becomes an online one. Therefore, the technical characteristics of these technologies extend their offline life, making them an essential tool related to their socialization, while becoming a testing ground for

how to manage their identity, typical of their age. Without forgetting the fact that teenagers mainly associate these technologies with free time and lack of learning, the analyzed data shows that by using these technologies, young people create supportive, social and cognitive spaces that undoubtedly They are also collaborative learning. Informally supported by their immediate community. circle, where there is ample opportunity to develop a wide range of abilities at a social, cultural, professional or technical level. As mentioned earlier, young people acquire important network capital. Sharing one's experiences, concerns and opinions through alternative spaces of leisure and participation is an important vector of learning, even if the people involved do not perceive it as such. In any case, this impression probably stems from the informal nature of this learning, which is clearly collaborative (horizontal and egalitarian, as opposed to the traditional vertical flow of information transfer, from informed adults to undisciplined adults), and is largely supported by take by social relations beyond. Their family, that is, they are not focused on the practical performance of using digital technologies, and in the end, I say that this research shows important aspects and some of them that need further investigation, and the research findings of this article are the same as my findings. And it has no conflict with my findings

Proposals

We need to revolutionize digital leisure in society, implement many projects on the socialization of leisure in society and try to teach children how to use messengers and social networks for informal learning.

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