Samy Tayie, Manisha Pathak-Shelat & Irma Hirsjarvi
El Cairo (Egypt), Wisconsin (USA) & Helsinki (Finland)

Young People's Interaction with Media in Egypt, India, Finland, Argentina and Kenya

La interacción de los jóvenes con los medios en Egipto, India, Finlandia, Argentina y Kenia

Abstract

In contemporary information society finding, evaluating and using information is a key survival skill. Conventional and new media such as libraries, archives, mass media and the Internet serve an important function in society as the sources of information. This chapter will focus on findings from research that was carried out in Egypt, India, Finland, Argentina and Kenya. Based on empirical research, it gives an overview of how young people today use a variety of sources for information seeking and describes the implications of these findings for media literacy programs. The chapter specifically explores young people's use of new digital and conventional media for information seeking and disseminating. Media diaries were collected from 175 children in Argentina, 100 in Egypt, 160 in India and 144 in Finland by the project researchers. With the help of the Nokia Research Centre we also managed to obtain 48 completed diaries from Kenya. All diaries were collected in the first half of 2010. Some light will also be shed on efforts led by international organizations, especially UNESCO, to foster teacher training in media and information literacy and create worldwide awareness of this competence.

Resumen

En la actual sociedad de la información, encontrar, valorar y utilizar la comunicación es una estrategia fundamental de supervivencia. Los medios tradicionales y nuevos como las bibliotecas, archivos, medios de masas o Internet tienen una función crucial para las sociedades como fuentes de información. Este trabajo presenta los resultados de un estudio llevado a cabo en Egipto, India, Finlandia, Argentina y Kenia. Basada en una investigación empírica, ofrece una visión general de cómo los jóvenes de hoy en día utilizan diversas fuentes para la búsqueda de información y cuáles son sus implicaciones para los programas de alfabetización mediática. En concreto se explora cómo los jóvenes utilizan los medios digitales (nuevos y convencionales) tanto para buscar información como para difundirla. Los investigadores del proyecto recogieron los diarios de medios de comunicación de 175 niños de Argentina, 100 de Egipto, 160 de la India y 144 de Finlandia. Con la ayuda del Nokia Research Centre también pudimos obtener 48 diarios completos de Kenia. Todos los diarios fueron recogidos durante el primer semestre de 2010. Los hallazgos giran en torno a los esfuerzos internacionales, especialmente de la UNESCO, de fomentar la formación docente en alfabetización mediática e informacional, creando conciencia mundial sobre este tipo de alfabetización en los profesores.

Keywords / palabras clave

Young people, diaries, information providers, media use, new media, media education, Internet, participation.
Jóvenes, diarios, proveedores de información, el uso de medios de comunicación, nuevos medios de comunicación, educación en medios, Internet, participación.

Dr. Samy Tayie is Full Professor of the Faculty of Mass Communication at the Cairo University (Egypt) (stayie@link.net).
**Dr. Manisha Pathak-Shelat** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (USA) (shelat@wisc.edu)
Dr. Irma Hirsjarvi is Professor at the University of Jyväskylä, and of the Open University (Finland) (irma.hirsjarvi@jyu.fi).

1. Introduction

The term «information» seems deceptively innocuous, uncomplicated and neutral. Finding, evaluating and using information seems to be an everyday activity just like breathing, of which we are barely conscious. Information, however, is intricately linked with issues of power, hegemony and something as basic as survival in contemporary society. That is why information and communication have been a key focus in efforts as early as 1960s to establish a new world order, and it is only appropriate that information literacy is now considered an intrinsic component of media literacy programs.

Information seeking and processing is becoming increasingly complex with the multiplication of information sources and channels, the breaking-down of past gate-keeping institutions, global media flows and the shift from consuming information to prosuming information. Our information landscapes include conventional and new media sources like libraries, mass media, alternative media, folk media, archives, signs and billboards, commercial material and oral communications. Navigating these landscapes requires several different literacies. The new digital media, increasingly popular among young people all over the world, require an additional set of critical literacies because a vast amount of information on new media is user-generated. The rapid development of new media platforms has added new dimensions to media literacy programs.

New media literacy is a convergence of all literacy developed over the past centuries including classic literacy, audiovisual literacy, digital literacy and information literacy, with a humanistic perspective (Pérez Tornero & Varis, 2010). Based on this notion of new literacy, Chen, Wu and Wang (2010) propose a framework that offers a systematic view of new media literacy. They propose that new media literacy be understood as two continuums from consuming to prosuming literacy and from functional to critical literacy.
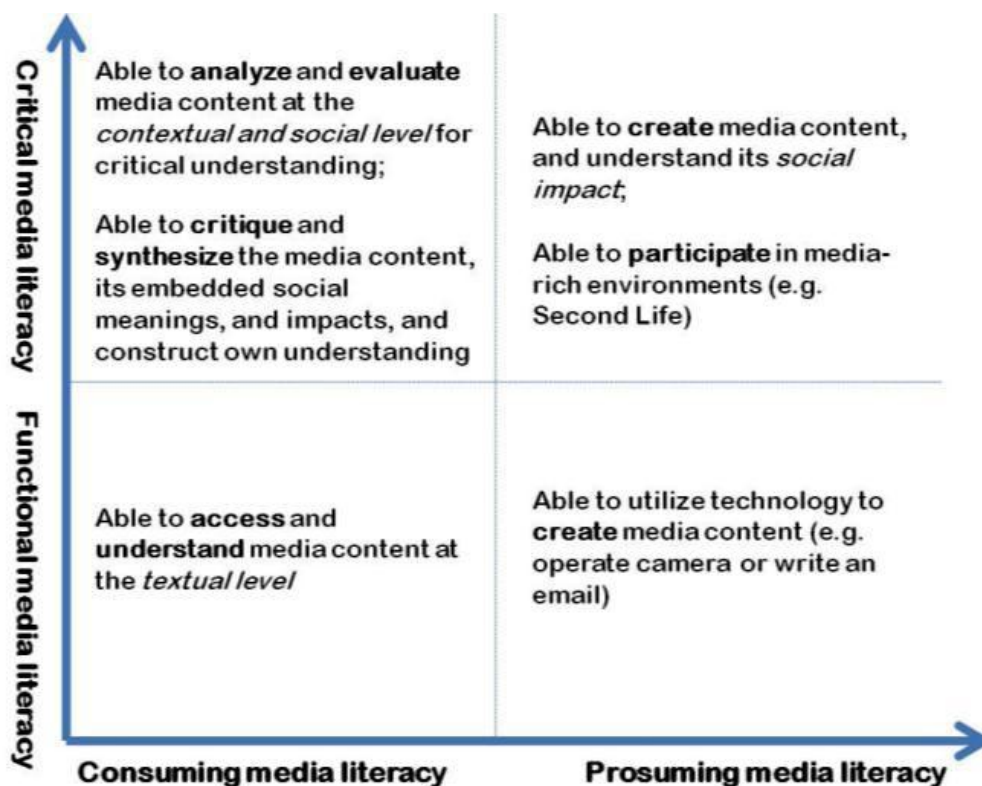
Media educators all over the world have also realized that literacy practices -including media and information literacy – are culturally situated practices. A UNESCO declaration in Prague (2003)

urged the world's governments to develop interdisciplinary programs to promote information literacy as a necessary step towards creating a literate citizenry, an effective civil society and a competitive workforce. Caution must be exercised in responding to such a call. The past practice of imposing Eurocentric practices and curricula in all parts of the world has been heavily criticized. How information structures are organized in different geo-political locations; issues of access, availability and participation; and how active audiences negotiate their own meanings based on what they bring to a text (UNESCO curriculum) are important factors to consider in designing information literacy programs. Understanding of economic, cultural, political and ethical obstacles to information literacy is also vital. The role of empirical research in understanding young people's information needs, their information seeking behavior, and what different literacies they bring to this process is, therefore, crucial in designing successful and culturally relevant media education programs. At the same time empirical research would help us understand if youth practices vis a vis information behavior are distinctly different from the preceding generations. «Comparative Research in Youth Media participation» supported by the Academy of Finland is an example of empirical research that can contribute to meaningful media literacy programs. The project carried out between 2009-11 in Finland, Egypt, India and Argentina attempted to understand youth media participation practices in four different contexts. This article, based on empirical research of media diaries in Egypt, India, Finland, Argentina and Kenya, gives an overview of how young people in different geographic and socio-cultural locations today engage with a variety of sources for information seeking and disseminating and what the implications of the findings are for media literacy programs.

2. Methodology

The idea to collect media diaries as a part of the Global Comparative Research on Youth Media Participation arose at an early international meeting of the project. The venue of the YMP project, the Research Centre for Contemporary Culture in the University of Jyväskylä, had already put together such a collection −«One Day of Media»− in Finland (Kytömäki, Nirkko & Suoninen, 2003). In it, over 1,500 people around the country wrote about their use of media on one particular day, November 29th 2001. In Finland, a collection of diaries about one winter's day had already been published in 2001 «Suomalaisen päivä» (The day of a Finn). The idea of collecting this kind of data about contemporary media use was hovering in the air, as it had also been done elsewhere, like in England by Davit Gauntlett and Annette Hill (TV-living; Television, Culture and Everyday Life, London 1999). The Finnish «One Day of Media» project was successful, and clearly brought up interesting further research questions and rich qualitative data, so it was taken as a model for our research project as well.

We were also able to collect media diaries for this exploratory research project from Argentina (N=175), Egypt (N=100), India (N=160) and Finland (N=144) through the project researchers. With the help of the Nokia Research Centre we also gathered in media diaries from Kenya (N=48). All of them were collected in the first half of 2010. We analyzed these texts for expressions of responsible citizenship (Kotilainen, Suoninen, Hirsjärvi & Kolomainen, 2011), remembering the inequalities of living conditions and disparities as a background of the analysis (Tufte & Enghel, 2009) and giving special emphasis to possible visible references to inclusive citizenship (Kabeer, 2005) and overall participation through media.

The children as media users in this study are not only seen as a «single cultural phenomenon» or as a group audience but also «as a multiple grouping and actors who are shaped by sociocultural differences» (Kotilainen, Suoninen, Hirsjärvi & Kolomainen, 2011), whose desires and practices - also in the use of media and the activities connected to it - are in constant movement and whose practices are developing. Furthermore, as Rossanna Reguillo points out (2009), political activities should be seen not only as local but as part of the global changes in children's media use. When talking about blogging Reguillo states that children's and young people's «subjective, personal, emotional everyday matters shape politics» and their actions through media should be respected as such. This means that access through media in vital, also as part of the learning process of civic citizenship.

The fluidity of the public and private spheres in children's lives means that there is a need to override the previous idea of the traditional division between the rational public and emotional private spheres (Dahlgren, 2006; Kotilainen & Rantala, 2009). The media diaries truly show how children have a mixed position and modes of participation in all media − but also the cultural competency that early access to media and the networks with their peer activities offer in a world of the converging media (Jenkins, 2006; Jenkins & al., 2009).

The children were simply asked to write down all their media uses on one day (April 20th, 2011) from the moment they woke up until they went to sleep. They were also especially encouraged to mention not only the uses but also to write about the purposes of their media use, their thoughts and feelings connected to these uses and the content. Overall, the writings were short, as expected, a maximum of one and half pages of hand-written text. In some schools the given task varied from that intended, so some texts were extremely short, consisting only of a few words and a couple of lines. However, the results proved an excellent window for the variations in different cultures, highlighting the modes of media use, the meaning-making processes and even the differences in the modes of media participation.

In the following pages, the findings of this analysis in different countries will be discussed in relation to the given task, asking how these results should be read through the needs of the school curriculum and media education in general. The aim was to get a close picture of how media uses are embedded in everyday life −minute by minute− in the different cultures of children around the age of 14.

3. Egypt

Egypt is the largest country in the Arab world in terms of population with 85 million people, two thirds of whom are under 25. Egypt has a wide range of state-run and private media. The Egyptian Radio and Television Union, which is a part of the Ministry of Information, supervises radio and television broadcasting. There are three national TV channels, six local channels and some private TV channels.

There are seven national radio networks. Three government-run publishing houses publish dozens of newspapers and magazines in Arabic, English, French and German. It is estimated that there are more than 600 newspapers and magazines in Egypt (Higher Press Council, 2009).

Egypt has a modern film industry which plays a role in the Arab world similar to that of Hollywood in the West. Egyptian films and TV programs are very popular in Arabic countries. It is estimated that the mobile phone subscribers represents 101% of the population. Some 65% of homes in Cairo and 40% of homes in rural areas have an Internet connection, and Web access is widely available at Internet cafes in the big cities.

Diaries were written by school children from preparatory schools (12-14 years old) in Cairo (urban area) and Fayoum (rural area). They were asked detail their media use for April 20th, 2011.

Analysis of the diaries suggests that there were some differences among young people with respect to their use of the media. Geographical location, age and gender emerged as important influencing factors.

Younger children were interested in being seen online, while the older ones were more interested in downloading material and films from the Internet. Also, the children from Cairo used Internet and mobile phones more often than those from Fayoum, the rural area in which the children used traditional media (radio, television and newspapers) more than those in Cairo.

It was also found that children use media mainly after returning home from school mostly between 8 and 10 pm.

Some quotes from the children's diaries: «I used the Internet to chat with my friends and to spend time with them. I also watched television for some time to see serials (a girl from Cairo).

- «I used the Internet to do some home-work for nearly 2 hours from 8 to 10 pm. It was very useful as it enabled me to gather a lot of information for an assignment. The teacher was happy with it» (a girl from Cairo).
- «I used the Internet to read the news and to stay in touch with friends by chatting with them» (a girl from Cairo).
- «I watched a movie on television which was a comedian and then I used the Internet for 2 hours from 9 to 11 pm» (a girl from Cairo).
- «I use the Internet as a dictionary to find out the meanings of some words. I also used the mobile phone to call my father who works abroad (a girl from Cairo).
- «I used the Internet to find information about the globe and other countries around us» (a boy from Cairo).
- «I read newspapers to know about sports and football news. I also like reading magazines» (a boy from Cairo).
- «I follow educational programs on television. They are very useful. I also like watching religious programs on both television and radio. I learn a lot from these programs» (a 14-year-old boy from Cairo).

The above information suggests that the Internet is an important medium for all children in Cairo. They all used it on a daily basis in the evening. For children, the Internet was an important

source of information, a medium for fun and entertainment and also a channel to meet and chat to their friends. Cairo children hardly mentioned that they use the other media such as television, radio or newspapers. In Fayoum, the children's use of the media was different.

Some quotes from their diaries:

- «I watch TV every evening as a kind of break while studying» (a boy from Fayoum).
- «I always watch television in the evening. I like watching serials and soap operas» (a girl).
- «I watch television everyday in the evening to know news about foreign people and foreign countries» (a boy).
- «I like watching sports programs specially football news. I also like watching programs on nature and animals. They are very interesting» (a boy).
- «I like watching films. Yesterday I saw a very good French comedy» (a boy).
- «I like listening to radio especially news programs and songs» (a girl).

Newspapers were also mentioned as important source for news especially human interest news. The Internet was also mentioned as being used for educational purposes, to seek information and do online searches for school homework. Entertainment and fun were also among the reason for using the Internet.

- «I went online to chat with some friends. Sometimes I use the mobile phone to go online» (a boy).

A boy mentioned that he uses his mobile phone for games. The mobile does not appear to be a very common medium in rural areas.

Findings from the diaries have indicated that the geographical location was an important factor in deciding the young people's use of the media. It was also vital in deciding the purpose of their media use. Young people from the rural areas, who apparently come from low-income families, indicated that they used traditional media such as television, radio and newspapers more than those from the urban area (Cairo).

4. India

The diaries show that children give media a very important place in their lives and consider them of utmost importance for the country's progress and development.

«My day starts with media and ends with media» says a girl from Cairo. «When we switch on the media, they just open up all the boundaries and limitations imposed on us», she continues. The importance of the media in world affairs is not lost on them. «The media run this world» (urban boy).

These young people see a strong link between media, public awareness, public opinion and progress of their country.

An urban girl explains, «public opinion depends to a large extent on the press... what is important is correct, neutral, unbiased reporting. Correct reporting depends on the freedom of the press».

Another student highlights the watchdog function of the media. «The government may not like the common people to know about its failures and unpopular measures. In such a situation everybody will have to keep his/her ears and eyes open to the government role and function. They will have to see that the freedom of the press is not curbed and that they get balanced and not distorted news».

One of the most striking observations from the diaries is that in talking about media every child associated media first and foremost with information. They did talk about entertainment and making connections through media, and both these functions were seen as secondary to information even when their own entertainment-related media use was high.

«Anything that gives or depicts information is called media» is the definition advanced by a rural girl. «Media bring us information about the whole world sitting at our home» says another rural girl.

They show interest in information on all the three levels - local, national and world. The diaries also show that children are interested in a wide range of subjects like politics and civic affairs, terrorism, wild life, health, history, science, cooking, cricket and movies. The children are aware of the vast variety of media that exist today and they also know about their potential.

«If I am watching TV there are channels like Discovery, History Channel, National Geographic, Living and Travel etc. and from these channels we get information about various things. Old sculpture, monuments, about nature and how we face problems during a natural disaster, the condition of economic development, how to survive if you are in a jungle,» says an urban boy.

Even when many rural and poor children have no access to computers and Internet, despite their limited knowledge and negligible personal exposure, they are aware of digital media and are fascinated by them.

Young people clearly have their favorites among the different sources of information and their own reasons for making their choices. Newspapers and television emerge as the most popular sources of general information. Information sharing with parents and peers is very evident.

An urban student says, «I prefer to use print media, it is my addiction. A day does not pass that I don't pick up the newspaper. It helps me to compete in this big world. It also helps me to answer some general knowledge questions if I take part in debate».

«In a country like India where regional languages are equally important, magazines and newspapers in regional languages play a significant role in informing people about the events and happenings in India and the world,» stresses another student.

«Books are an ocean of knowledge; once we learn how to swim we can search and get knowledge about various mysterious unknown forces of nature. Even in my free time I prefer to *watch* the newspaper and I mean that I 'watch' the newspaper - its headlines and pictures, and I only read the topics which actually interest me, though I have to admit that the newspaper habit was forced on me by my parents, as advised by my teachers. I must agree that whenever I take part in quizzes or competitions, the information I gained through books and newspapers has helped me a lot and it increases my vocabulary too,» says an urban girl.

The counterargument to this view is «I would prefer television only because we can listen and watch news that we can't do through newspapers or radio». Some students also mention that the high level of illiteracy in India makes television a more suitable medium for seeking information (an urban boy).

Internet is mentioned by urban as well as rural students, more frequently by urban students, but more in connection with computer use and school projects in rural areas while playing games and connecting with friends and family take precedence in the cities. Among digital media the mobile phone is the favorite and most widely used medium, even among rural children but again, it is not the preferred medium for seeking information.

Children show a strong emotional response to what they see and read. Issues that elicit the strongest emotional reaction are terrorism, Indo-Pak relations, India's progress and reputation, ill-treatment of women and girls, especially rape and social injustice. Typical emotional triggers are: «Whenever there is a depiction of stories on women on news». «When I watch and hear about cases of rape on television news». «When I watch the Indian team losing in a cricket match». When I read or watch news about any natural calamity where people have died». «When I watch news about terrorist attacks or social malpractices like female infanticide». A rural girl's anger is visible in her statement: «When media depicts news about the girl child being born and thrown away, it makes me very angry. At that time... I feel like destroying the TV set».

Children show acute awareness of the risks and harm associated with the media and problems with inaccurate or unbalanced information they might receive from them.

«But basically I don't like the Internet. Children play violent games and misuse it in many ways. Children sit for long hours in front of a screen and then it damages their eyesight, health and mental capabilities as well,» says an urban student. Both rural and urban students point out that sometimes exaggeration in the transmission of information creates panic and also spoils India's reputation in the world. An urban student cautions with an example: «There are methods for making bombs and if child has opened that website then what can be done?».

Despite their strong emotional engagement there is little evidence of production, information dissemination or creative participation in media, and this raises questions about structural, infrastructural and policy-level limitations.

5. Finland

The diaries of the Finnish schoolchildren emphasize the meaning of good access to all media due to factors such as the school system, libraries, the extent of mobile phone usage, state support for literature and magazines and the media environment as a whole. Therefore, it is no wonder that the texts written by the young people repeatedly brought up interesting details such as the children's own disbelief at the amount of media they themselves use in a day. Media access was easy at home, in school and via the mobile phone, and there were very few if any restrictions on their use. So the children were using media almost all day long, with media use of more than 5 hours per day quite common:

- I have used the Internet daily between 10.00 and 23.00 with breaks of a couple of minutes or hours. The pages I have used are, for example: DevianArt.com, Onemanga.com, mangaFox.com, Sangatsu manga, Aniki forun, Kupoli, Wikipedia, Google (a girl).

As media are a natural part of their daily lives it has become routine, which the children were aware of when charting their actual use of media.

Also apparent was the social nature of particular media: children were connected to friends and relatives through irc-gallery, Facebook, Youtube and Messenger, and so on, often simultaneously:

> - Messenger is an important media for me, because I live far away from my friends so we can chat and I can hear what's going on. Then I call and send text messages to my friend and we put pictures from his computer onto my flash drive. We went to my friend's place with another friend of mine and watched the news (a girl).

The simultaneous and multiple uses of media were common: using mobile both for contacting others and listening to music, and using social media and following the news at the same time was typical:

> - It is fun to do everything with the computer and I use it for programming games, editing pictures, communication (picture gallery and Messenger), having fun (games), listening music, using Internet and watching movies (a boy).
>
> - No new comments on picture gallery, nothing new in Facebook. I clicked on the web pages of the afternoon newspaper. The news did not interest me much, about the volcano eruption that had already been talked about since last Thursday. So I ended up reading entertainment news; yet another person had been for cosmetic surgery and there was a big story about it across several pages. Zip, away that page goes. From my bed I grabbed my phone - it was obviously Nokia. No news, nobody had called, either. After a shower I checked quickly if there was anyone on Messenger and for any emails in my Hotmail inbox (a girl).

The global aspect of media came up in several ways. New media in particular helps to cross borders, and the influences of the other cultures were obviously easier to absorb. Furthermore language barriers (especially in English) were lowered:

> - I read books at school and sent some messages to my friends. After school I read the local newspaper, mainly because me and my friend had been interviewed in the football supplement. I turned on the computer and went to picture gallery, then went to Messenger and Skype. I talked for a moment with my sister through Skype, she is an exchange student in South Korea (a girl).
>
> - The biggest news was about the volcano in Iceland and the ash cloud that is spreading and its consequences. In connection to that I joined the «Send the Foreign Ash Clouds Back Abroad» [an anti-racist humor group] on Facebook (unknown).
>
> - I used media today when I watched Russian news – I have lot of friends abroad so I sometimes use the computer to talk to them on Messenger where I can use webcam (a boy).

One of the consequences of the global perspective is the awareness of world issues – a theme that came up among children from all countries. In Finland, media use for social needs clearly outweigh the political ones, but there were plenty of comments on contemporary issues:

> - Later on in the evening I watched TV for a moment, and just before writing this diary I read a book about boys in Afghanistan. It made me think. I realized that what is common for me is unfamiliar to millions of others. I feel privileged (unknown, Finland, 139).

6. Argentina

The strong expressions were also noted in the responses from children in Argentina - but in a different way. It may even be said that the overall impression of the responses was that they were rather emotional. In the diaries media was even seen as a good friend filling an emptiness, preventing loneliness or boredom, or giving life to the moments when real friends are not available:

> - Most of the media I used were fun and made me feel good; I spent several great moments with them, except for the newspapers that made me sad (girl, Argentina).
>
> - When I use the media to communicate with friends I never feel alone. I always feel the company of my friends. I feel happy. I used the media alone. And I talk with my friends about what is in the media if something really important happens. Media are very important for me because it is what I do most of the day (a girl)
>
> - When I came back from school, I used the phone a lot because it was good company while I was alone at home. I sent text messages, I turned on Messenger to chat, and I entered Facebook and Twitter. I also used the Internet to check my emails and to look at Amazon and the best buys (a boy).

For the children living in an urban area the mobile phone is understandably a tool for the social relations, not only with friends but also family and relatives:

> - I also use the regular telephone, to call my grandparents because they had been to the doctor and I wanted to know how they were. I also called a friend in another city – I do it

once a week. It is a need I have because she is a lot of fun and we have two very different lives (a boy).

- I used my cell phone with my mother because I can talk to my mum for free and I texted a friend because there was something I needed to tell her. Then I used the regular phone to call a friend and tell her about the meeting we had in the student union. I used the computer because I use it every day to chat and to enter Facebook (a girl).

- Before falling asleep, I turned on the TV to see a film and I sent messages to my brother who is living in another province. I felt much better when I communicated with him, because I missed him a lot. The media I most use is the cell phone (a girl).

Among Argentine children the mobile was a central tool for media use. Compared to the Finnish media diaries where multiple uses of media were common, children in rural areas in particular made multiple use of a single medium, the mobile phone.

7. Kenya

As in other countries, the children acknowledged the importance of media as a worldwide phenomenon. The main role of the media was seen as educating and informative. The news is read carefully and commented on thoughtfully in the diaries. Radio is clearly the most important media device for children along with newspapers, but the mobile phone was also mentioned as a tool for following the news. This need to keep up with the news comes up constantly; not just the need to know what is happening in their area but also globally.

- Before starting the daily work I have to know what is happening in our country and around the world...So I turn on the radio...I was happy with Citizen FM and their good work. You are really helping the youth to know what to do at the right time (a girl).

- I like listening to the radio because it enables me to know more about our country (a girl).

- Listening [to the radio] helps -- It encourages people to know what is happening worldwide (a boy).

The children express how they learn and critique politics and culture through the media, and describe the multiple uses of the media, and their role in society.

- The most interesting is Afro-Cinema. I like it because I have to know what is happening in other countries e.g. Nigeria (a girl).

- The Kiss FM teaches us how to take care of ourselves. It makes us relax. Kiss FM educated the learner. This channel gives jobs to the jobless (a girl).

- In my leisure time, I like to read the newspapers about chapter six of the harmonized draft constitution of Kenya , in which part three speaks about human rights and the gender commission (a girl).

- When I was on the way...I was with a crowd of people with the same newspaper and they were advertising it. I was interested in it and I borrowed one to have a look. I was looking ahead. I got somewhere and I saw a lot of children reading a poem. That poem was very interesting and it was about «Education is the key of life» (a girl).

As the previous quotes show, the use of media is a natural part of everyday life, and the sense of communality is strong in the use of the media. The strong women's movement in Africa was frequently acknowledged by the children, and issues related to women's rights were followed carefully.

- I heard [from a radio] shocking news about the brave girl. ..The same day and date and time I heard about the woman who got burnt (a girl).

Overall in Kenya as in India, reflecting on the social questions related to the media was a significant part of the media diaries. They speak of shared social discourse how social issues affect everyday practices at school and at home.

8. Conclusion

An analysis may conclude that the new media, Internet and the mobile phone, were the main information providers for young people, as was common in all countries. At the same time, there were some differences among countries. India and Egypt, for instance, were similar to some extent, with respect to the use children made of the traditional media in rural areas. There were some similarities among people who live in rural areas in all countries in terms of the media used, and not merely the new media, while in Argentina the mobile phone was the vital medium in town and country.

Children use the new media regularly on a daily basis for specific purposes, such as chatting, searching for information and downloading material. Children have also become more active and interactive online.

The new media have also led to the creation of some common habits of usage among young people regardless of their countries of origin. They even use certain words and items for SMS and Facebook that are known to them and, in most cases, unknown to older generations.

Though the new media have brought many benefits, previous research suggests that the Internet and the mobile phone may harm children (Sonia Livingstone & al., 2006: 54-55), which urgently requires media literacy education to be implemented especially in countries with a lower level of media literacy education such as Egypt and India.

Children nowadays are heavy users of new media. They are also more participatory and interactive than before. As suggested by Kotilainen (2010: 81-82) children's citizenship can be strengthened by civic media education.

Research findings show us that there is a clear divide in media use between young people from urban and rural areas. Both of these young collectives consider the media to be attractive but not all can access them. The young living n rural areas are limited to traditional media, although the mobile phone is used to access Internet and other services. This means, that the mobile phone could help to close this gap between the urban and rural young.

Children and young people, especially in Kenya, have a need to know what's happening in their country, but also in the world, a finding that shows the interest of young people in current events. The emotions linked to media use and consumption is also a fact to keep in mind: they need to be online, to communicate with their peers, to consult information, to have fun, all these activities are integrated into their lives as a whole.

But the question remains in our paper about whether these young people have linked use of media to media education. No one has told them of the importance of being creative or critical in their use of media, , a finding that urges us to prioritize the integration of media education in all educational programs. These young people are using all these new media, they are consulting all this information but they have no educational spaces where they can reflect on their own use of media, and for this reason, they need media literacy more than ever. This media literacy should take into account different contributions from around the world; critical perspective (Kellner, 2007), consider varied contexts (Gutiérrez & Tyner, 2012) and the international efforts to develop media education (Aguaded, 2011).

At the present time, a wide range of initiatives are being carried out worldwide to promote media and information literacy, in particular UNESCO's teacher training curriculum. It was created by a group of experts with the help and support of UNESCO and is an initiative that should be supported worldwide, following its presentation in Fez (Morocco) in May 2011. This curriculum should be taken as mentoring for teachers being trained in different countries. We also need the collaboration of policy makers as well as ministries of education in different countries in order to foster the process of teacher training.

Other international organizations such as the Academy of Finland and Mentor Association are also involved in this kind of activity. The Mentor Association is promoting highly ambitions programs for teacher training in the Arab world and Latin America, and supports initiatives to raise awareness of the value and importance of media and information literacy.

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