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Table of Contents

<i>Citizen Journalism and News Credibility: BBC and Al Jazeera Networks. A Comparative Study</i> Mona Badran	pp. 1-10
<i>Measuring Digital Literacy in Arabic Speaking Web Users</i> Hazar Eskandar Susan Dun	pp. 11-18
<i>Supervision Matters: Teenagers' Perception of Parents' Involvement in Their Internet Use</i> Shujun Jiang	pp. 19-32
<i>Media Construction of Apocalypse: Halley's Comet and the End of Mayan Calendar through the Lens of Discourse Analysis</i> Johana Kotišová	pp. 33-44
<i>Modern Communication: Judgement of the Past</i> Nurul Nisa' Binti Omar	pp. 45-52
<i>People Power PR: Recasting Activists as Practitioners</i> Maria Lynn McLeod	pp. 53-64
<i>Problems Regarding the Invasion of Privacy on the Internet in Japan</i> Makoto Sakai	pp. 65-72
<i>Semantic Gaps Are Dangerous</i> Michael Ejstrup Bjarne le Fevre Jakobsen	pp. 73-84
<i>A New Method of Resistance to the Political Power: Social Media</i> Hulya Akkas Cansu Alacam Onur Dursun	pp. 85-98
<i>The Reproduction of the Image of Traditional Turkish Women's Role in Commercial Television</i> Cansu Alacam Hulya Akkas Onur Dursun	pp. 99-111

***Citizen journalism and news credibility:
BBC and Al Jazeera networks. A Comparative study***

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The European Conference on Media & Mass Communication 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

In a world facing rapid technological advancements and a continuous occurrence of events, citizen journalism has become widely used in the news business. Many news agencies are actually implementing citizen journalists and depend upon their reports on breaking news as they are faster and less expensive. There is a plenty of confusion regarding this concept. Many editors have real concerns regarding engaging audience to truly participate in news media.

Media professionals often suspect citizen journalists with doubt, especially when they are supporters of the issues they write about. As only professionally-trained journalists can understand and effectively apply the reporters' code of ethics.

This research aims at investigating how usage of new media methods and the new trend of citizen journalists affect the credibility of news gathering. How can news stations guarantee the truth behind such videos and how can this affect its credibility among viewers.

The researcher is conducting a comparative study between BBC and Al Jazeera News Networks in terms of how they measure the ethical code of videos sent by citizen journalists. According to the objective of the study, the two main research methods that apply for this research are focus groups and intensive interviews. This research aims at explaining how usage of digital media can be able to either enhance or decrease the credibility of news, and how it can actually affect audience perceptions and understanding of reality in terms of broadcasted news.

Key words: Citizen Journalism, BBC, Al Jazeera, News credibility

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Introduction

What is Citizen Journalism?

In the past, citizen journalism was mediated and limited to people writing newsletters, letters to the editor, or contacting news organizations. Local citizens then provided video or film to news organizations. For instance, the famous Zapruder Film of the November 22nd, 1963, assassination of John F. Kennedy in Dallas, was one of the first instances of citizen journalism that took a visual form rather than interpretative print comments. Around the turn of this century, mobile phone usage gave individuals the "power of the palm" and the ability to write text messages that could be forwarded by the original senders. As the technology improved, people were able to use their mobile phones as cameras then video recorders. For example, the video Al Jazeera news channel got of former Libyan leader, Moamer Gadhafi, was a citizen video, the final video that showed that Gadhafi was killed in October 2011, was recorded on a mobile device and sent to the channel. (Dreier, 2012) Another example is the video of the killing of the Iranian student, Neda Soltan in Tehran in the Iranian elections protests in June 2009, went viral on the Internet and reached mass audiences.

Citizen journalism is currently popular in places where media access is unavailable or problematic, like during the Arab Spring and civil war in Syria. Also, YouTube has become a major outlet for all kinds of movements and citizen journalism. Saudis, for example, view more YouTube videos produced in KSA than watch local television.

In some places, alternative news channels are created by citizen journalist on YouTube, such as the Red Shirt-Yellow Shirt political struggle in Thailand before its military coup.

Citizen journalism provides normal citizens with the chance to document their own version of reality and tell their own side and point of view of the story. It is actually distinguished from professional journalism in that normal citizens utilize digital media methods to report on events on the ground, upload text, and videos directly to the internet and supply the information and videos to media outlets. (El-Nawawy and Khamis, 2013) Therefore, citizen journalism "is a promising new breed of news-making that has been championed by various scholars...[for] granting ordinary citizens a novel, hands-on role" (Reich, 2008, p. 739). It "gives people a voice and therefore power. The people's participation itself and what they produce are regarded with the hope to contribute to an informed citizenry and democracy," (Nip, 2006, p. 212). It also assumes that "average citizens are capable of intelligent judgement, mature understanding, and rational choice if offered the opportunity; in other words, that democracy as 'self-government' is not a dream but a practical premise," (Rosen, 1994, p. 18)

Steve Outing of Poynter.Org has outlined the different types of citizen journalism, which are mainly two main types: semi-independent citizen journalism and independent citizen journalism. The first type, which is semi-independent citizen journalism mainly, includes the contribution of citizens to existing professional news sites. There are many examples to this type. The First is the readers who post their own comments next to stories done by professional reporters. Currently, most of the news websites allow readers to post comments; however, in order to avoid

objectionable messages, many websites require registration before posting comments. The second is the readers who add their information to articles written by professional journalists. The third is readers who keenly work with professional reporters in putting a story together. Reporters might ask readers who have certain experience in a particular field to send information concerning this topic. This information is then integrated into the final story. The fourth is reader blogs that are integrated into professional news websites. This also includes blogs where readers actually critique the performance of the news organization, such as Lawrence Blogs.

The second type which is independent citizen journalism involves working in means that are totally independent of traditional, professional news outlets. This type includes blogs where individuals report on issues in their societies or offer commentaries on daily events, such as Life Must Go On In Gaza and Sderot. Also, Independent citizen journalism includes websites that are run by an individual or a group of people who report on news events in their local community; some of them have editors and others do not. While some of them have print editions such as Daily Heights. There are also the hybrid sites where both professional and citizen journalists work together. (Rogers, 2014)

Citizen Journalism VS Professional Journalism

In a world facing rapid technological advancements and a continuous occurrence of events, citizen journalism has become widely used in the news business. Many news agencies are actually implementing citizen journalists and depend upon their reports on breaking news as they are faster and less expensive. There is a plenty of confusion regarding this concept. Many editors have real concerns regarding engaging audience to truly participate in news media. Media professionals often suspect citizen journalists with doubt, especially when they are supporters of the issues they write about. As only professionally-trained journalists can understand and effectively apply the reporters' code of ethics.

In a digital world with an entire collection of different methods to communicate an accurate message, it is harder to judge the value of non-professional eyewitness film that is shot on a cellular phone and posted on the internet opposed to a well thought-out, observational documentary that is broadcasted on a traditional television channel. (Bulkley, 2012) Incidents such as YouTube videos of citizens under fire from government forces in Syria and other videos related to Arab Spring events are altering the landscape of documentary filmmaking. This has become possible through the technology citizens are currently using, the available distribution platforms and the passion of normal citizens to tell the types of extraordinary stories that once have been the field of professional documentary makers. Accurate filmmaking has become hostage to such new instant technologies. However, many of those who are working in the field praise the developments for adding a richer component to factual documentaries and current affairs. It is apparent that the genre will never be the same again. (Bulkley, 2012)

Molly Dineen, documentary pioneer, believes that internet videos and phone cameras should threaten broadcasters who assume that TV audience will move away from them. However, the combined field is a hive of creativity that should be adding to the performance of traditional documentary makers and not take away. The founder of

Films of Record and award-winning filmmaker, Roger Graef, speaks with enthusiasm about his ability to source and utilize footage from YouTube and social networks to enhance what he himself shoots. In his film, *The Trouble with Pirates*, for Channel 4, Graef used home video footage that pirates and captives shot. He wouldn't have gotten this material through any other means. But he also underlines the risks. The first risk is provenance as it costs time and money to verify whether the shot material is real or fake. The second risk is that if one can simply shoot using a camera phone doesn't mean that one should do this. Graef worries that commissioners will be applying this as a justification to cut budgets for factual even more. (Bulkley, 2012)

Adrian Wills, UKTV's general manager factual, declares that social media and citizen journalists' footage do not impact his programming; on the other hand, he admits that it is a vital marketing method. Wills says that digital activity has found place in reaction to news events as the digital stuff is more about strengthening around what broadcasters are already doing. (Bulkley, 2012)

On the other side, editorial director ITN Productions, Chris Shaw, argues that social networks are opening up completely new landscape for documentary filmmakers. Shaw says that one can use content from social networks to make the most amazing films. Shaw adds that ITN's documentary for Channel 4, *Syria's Torture Machine*, drew on about thirty thousand clips that were uploaded on different social network sites such as 'trophy videos' from Syrian military torturers and also footage from local citizens and families who were caught up in demonstrations. Shaw says that objective journalism is not the same as investigating social networks for citizen journalism. There are two problems with this view. The first is that places like Syria, for example, journalists have not been able to be there. The second is that there is an extraordinary source on social networks for updated events even though broadcasters have to take extra caution to verify what they are using. From Shaw's point of view, the future will rely upon mixing citizen video with professionally shot footage in order to reach a more smoothed image. (Bulkley, 2012)

Ivan Sigal, Global Voices' executive director, says that the idea that citizen journalism is in conflict with or opposed to traditional journalism is obviously past currently. He clarifies that both types exist in a symbiotic relationship with each other and there are many opportunities to work together on news creations, content distribution and storytelling. (Bunz, 2010)

Jeff Deutchman, whose documentary of the day after Barak Obama was elected as the United States president called *11/4/08* used crowd-sourced footage, says that the new technologies definitely open up new opportunities for filmmaking. He explains that what is really interesting regarding what he had done is that it is basically oppositional not only to conventional documentaries but also to traditional thoughts of filmmaking that most of broadcasters have internalized. Deutchman believes that there are even more essential things to come as people discover how to utilize the current technology to create new and unique things. There is still much more to be explored in the coming time. (Bulkley, 2012)

Research design and methodology:

This research aims at investigating how usage of new media methods and the new trend of citizen journalists affect the credibility of news gathering. How can news

stations guarantee the truth behind such videos and how can this affect its credibility among viewers. The researcher did an online survey on 300 Egyptian youth aging between 18-40 asking them which is the most credible news network and which is the least. About 90 percent of the sample agreed that BBC news network is the most credible source of information and 93 percent agreed that Al Jazeera News Network is the least credible source of information. Therefore, the researcher has conducted a comparative study between BBC and Al Jazeera News Networks in terms of how they measure the ethical code of videos sent by citizen journalists. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, three research questions need to be answered appropriately.

RQ1: How usage of new media methods and the new trend of citizen journalists affect the credibility of news gathering?

RQ2: How can news stations guarantee the truth behind such videos?

RQ3: How can this affect its credibility among viewers?

According to the objective of the study, the two main research methods that apply for this research are focus groups and intensive interviews. The sample of the focus groups consists of 300 literate Egyptian youth aging 18-40, where literate refers to his/her ability to read and write and doesn't reflect a certain educational degree. About 30 focus groups were conducted where each focus group consisted of about 10 participants. Two intensive interviews were conducted. The first one is conducted with Dr. Ralph Berenger, a media scholar and an associate professor at the American University of Sharjah, UAE. Dr. Berenger is chosen due to his experience in the field of journalism and his vast amount of research regarding political media. The second one is conducted with Mr. Ashraf Sadeq, a media professional who works as the managing editor of the Egyptian Gazette, which is considered the oldest English newspaper in Egypt.

Discussion:

The data collected from the focus groups and the intensive interviews; in addition, to the data collected from the literature review have shown that the main reason behind the participants trust in BBC news network and mistrusting Al Jazeera News Network is because Al Jazeera is a propaganda broadcaster moving towards advocacy journalism. On the other hand, BBC news network strictly applies to a great extent editorial value judgements on any piece of news.

Al Jazeera has its own citizen journalism portal, called Sharek, it can found on (<http://sharek.aljazeera.net>), where normal contributors can become official. Once they have accomplished that trusted status, their videos will post without control. Sharek portal is available in twelve languages and is used by people from all over the world. (Dreier, 2012)

Riyad Minty, head of social media for Al Jazeera, says that Al Jazeera allows citizen journalism because it is a tool aiming at empowering people to tell their own stories. He adds that in many places such as Tunisia or Libya or even Bahrain, Al Jazeera couldn't have any reporter on the ground; in addition, they were kicked out several times. In such times, people used to send them their own perspective of what's happening and after Al Jazeera verifies such stories, they broadcast such videos on screen. Also, citizens can submit stories via e-mail or Smartphone applications that

the agency has created. As for citizens with less advanced cellular phones, Al Jazeera accepts reports to be sent via SMSs. (Dreier, 2012)

Minty explains that when the Arab Spring started during the end of 2010 and early 2011, Al Jazeera team witnessed a major increase in the type of content sent through to them and they were required to scale extremely. At times they were actually getting up to a thousand videos daily from street protestors in Egypt, Bahrain, and Libya. Most of such footage was driving Al Jazeera coverage onscreen and online as well. During 2011, Al Jazeera received almost seventy thousand videos from citizen journalists. Minty confirms that gathering videos through citizen journalists is not just a way for Al Jazeera to gather content, but also has become its own functioning community of citizen journalists and ordinary people who have a passion to express their points of view, tell stories and interact with each other. (Dreier, 2012)

The majority of the participants of the focus groups, almost 81%, have stated that Al Jazeera is a channel owned and controlled by the authoritarian and undemocratic Qatari royal family that sends independent journalists to jail when they criticise the regime. Also, about 92% of the participants confirmed that many leading journalists and TV presenters started to leave Al Jazeera channel since 2013 because the channel has become a propaganda broadcaster.

According to an article published in Der Spiegel, a German magazine, the German based journalist, Aktham Sulimen, has resigned from Al Jazeera channel because 'Al Jazeera has become a propaganda broadcaster'. Moreover, a Beirut based correspondent, says, Al Jazeera is taking an obvious position in every country from which it reports. This position is unfortunately not based on any journalistic priorities; however, it is based on the interests of the foreign ministry of Qatar. He adds that in order to keep his integrity as a reporter, he had to quit. (Hussein, 2013)

Dr. Ralph Berenger, associate professor and researcher at University of Sharjah, indicates that the main reason behind drawing down Al Jazeera's ratings is because it has over-reached in some places and moved toward advocacy journalism. That's always dangerous turf for media since in any controversy you have divisions that support the advocate, and divisions that don't. Berenger stressed on the fact that the Arab Spring would never have occurred had mainstream media did business as usual and ignored social media from citizen journalists. Mainstream media empowered social media users to reach mass audiences they could not have reached on their own networks. Social media, then, played an agenda-setting role. Finding the truth of submitted news stories involves leg work and research by journalists--the old-fashioned way. There are also technological techniques that can be employed to discern whether there was any digital editing going on that could raise questions about the report's veracity. (Berenger, 2014)

Ashraf Sadeq, managing editor at the Egyptian Gazette newspaper, indicates that the Doha-based al-Jazeera news channels (especially al-Jazeera Mubashir Masr), has reached a deplorable condition among news consumers in Egypt because it has lost its credibility, neutrality and its excessive reliance on media volunteers as its main source of information. The products of those volunteers are always laced with politically and religiously motivated messages, whose content serves the interests of Qatar, Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood group that want to destabilize Egypt. (Sadeq, 2014)

Regarding Al Jazeera coverage to the Egyptian revolution in January 2011, almost 71% of the participants criticized Al Jazeera for dedicating about two hours to a sprawling speech by Muslim Brotherhood associated cleric, Yusuf al-Qaradawi. Al-Qaradawi turned out to be based in Qatar. Despite the fact that the speech didn't even attract a huge crowd in Egypt and being unrelated to what was happening on the Egyptian streets, Al Jazeera yet broadcasted it on screen. Participants explained that this was mainly propaganda for the Muslim Brotherhood, who actually did not lead the revolution but are favoured by the Qatari royal family. About 52% of the participants said that Al Jazeera opposed dictators such as Mubarak, not because he was a dictator, but because it was encouraged by a desire to weaken such system the Qatari state viewed as unfavourable. Also, about 78% of the participants stated that since the Muslim Brotherhood came to rule in Egypt, Al Jazeera has focused all its power in order to represent such group in a constructive light, in addition to, giving Morsi's shallow and disappointingly constructed speeches positive coverage.

As a similar event, Al Jazeera network totally ignored the protests taking place in Bahrain. However, the channel dedicated a huge amount of attention to the protests in Syria. Al Jazeera's commitment to principles of fairness and justice seem to apply only when it is dealing with peoples or governments who they dislike. However, as resignations of correspondents and journalists continue and the increase regarding public criticism to Al Jazeera, the actuality of its political agenda will be really hard to hide. (Hussein, 2013)

Regarding BBC trustworthiness as a source of information with respect to citizen journalism, about 89% of the participants agreed that BBC News Networks depend mostly on professional reporters to cover the occurring events worldwide. However, participants added that when citizen journalists' reports are being broadcasted, BBC anchors clearly indicate that these are reports sent by normal citizens and not their professional ones. Due to such transparency, such participants indicate that BBC is a trustworthy source of news.

Ashraf Sadeq claims that the reasons behind the BBC's international success as a credible news outlet can be summarized into two media terms: professionalism and a strict application of the editorial value judgments on any hard or soft news story. (Sadeq, 2014)

Dr. Ralph Berenger believes that citizen journalism doesn't affect the credibility of respected news organizations such as BBC, as long as citizen journalist reports are disclaimed as what they are, which is unverified reports from citizen journalists. (Berenger, 2014)

Regarding the dependence of some news networks on citizen journalism technique as a source of spreading information, Sadeq indicates that as a journalist, he found out that has had negative effects on the profession and the news consumers themselves. He explains the most important negative effects as follows: first, Citizen Journalists or self-imposed media workers do lack the essential skills and requirements that are needed to make their product/stories credible or newsworthy. Professionally – speaking, for example, a news outlet be it a newspaper, magazine, or a radio or TV station should not run a story that is produced by a citizen journalist because his/her news values and editorial judgment do not meet the internationally recognized

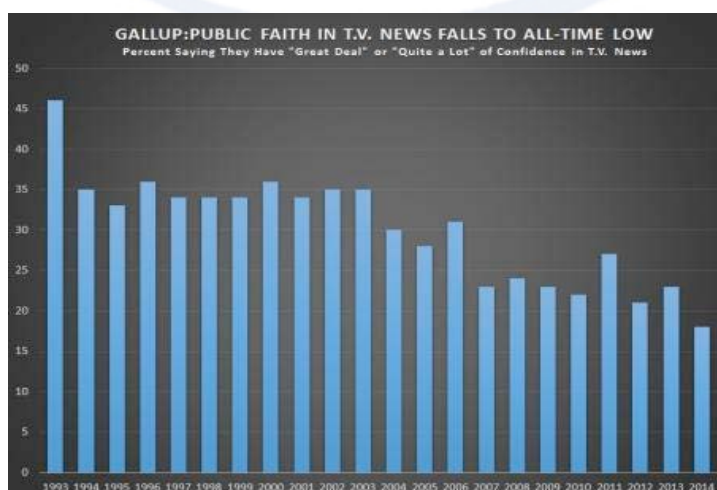
standards, codes of ethics and specifications that are applied by professional media outlets worldwide. Second, Citizen Journalists do not follow the profession code of ethics that has been approved by the Paris-based International Journalists' Union (IPU), and each country's press syndicate or union. Third, Citizen Journalists are not accredited union members and therefore they illegally practice a technical profession and misuse it for spreading false information or blackmailing purposes, which are considered crimes according to the Egyptian Penal Code. (Sadeq, 2014)

Dr. Berenger commented that he would be sceptical of most citizen journalism efforts since they seem to be advocates of something, and use their large soapboxes and megaphones to espouse their points of view by selectively editing, videoing and reporting. In the absence of professional journalists on the ground, however, much of this material gets broadcast, usually with a disclaimer that the information cannot be verified. He adds that one of the fears is that by giving so much attention to citizen journalism reports, verified news reports by professional journalists get squeezed out in the time constraints of traditional media. This is less of a worry in the digital realm where timeliness and space are less a problem. Editors are being forced by economic concerns such as staff shortages, less space, less broadcast time and more competition for upstarts, to consider the economic benefits of citizen journalist reports. (Berenger, 2014)

Concerning the Egyptian youth tend to trust bloggers and social media rather than news channels, about 92% confirmed this fact. They explained that such sources of information is much more clear, honest and free from censorship; therefore, they tend to believe in it more than normal news channels that follow certain agendas and political bias. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that only 8% of the participants confirmed that social media and bloggers do have their own hidden agendas and do follow certain political path.

Berenger confirmed that citizen journalists do benefit from being printed or aired on mainstream media, which are considered more credible. He referred to the fact that in the USA at least, television has sunk to a new low in credibility and now hovers around 40%. That's a big reversal from the 1960's when 70% regarded TV journalism as credible. (Berenger, 2014)

Public Faith in TV News 2014



Recommendations:

After conducting this research, the researcher has reached a final fact, which is that credibility of citizen journalism will always be doubtful. Despite citizen journalists' importance in documenting events, they will never be fully trusted. Such documentaries, videos and reports will always be suspicious of reflecting certain points of views, ideas and political trends.

Citizen journalism neither reflects nor represents professional journalism and is not as well considered as a credible source of information. Its product, which is the news story, will misguide and misinform the receivers. Such audience will unfortunately relay this wrong information to millions of people via the electronic social media outlets.

As for media workers, they should strive to correct some errors in the profession and purify their practices of any deviation in co-operation with lawyers and media professors, intellectuals and opinion makers. This is the only way to end the on-going battle between professional journalists and citizen journalists, in which no one will win. The only losers in this war are the people, who lose their right to receive correct and authentic information and know the truth.

News networks and agencies should double check whatever information, stories, and/or photos they receive from citizen journalists before broadcasting and transmitting them. However, such a process is absolutely a waste of the news outlet's money, time, and efforts. Therefore, it is highly recommended that news agencies should refrain as much as they can from using any material that comes from citizen journalists to avoid relaying or quoting information, whose credibility and authenticity are doubtful. This will as a result affect the news agency's credibility and trustworthiness.

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Measuring Digital Literacy in Arabic Speaking Web Users

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine whether self-reported digital literacy skills or knowledge of Internet related terms or a combination of both are reliable indicators of observed digital literacy levels of Arabic speaking Internet users. The ability to effectively find information on the Internet is necessary to be able to utilize the Internet and its tools to their fullest potential. Access to digital technology alone is not sufficient; users must be digitally literate to capitalize on the resources available on the Internet. Research in the West has found that users tend to overestimate their searching skills and that a test of Internet knowledge more accurately predicts digital literacy levels (Hargittai, 2009). We sought to test if the knowledge items from Hargittai's work would also predict the digital literacy levels of Arabic speaking Internet users. We replicated and extended Hargittai's method on a sample of 70 Arabic speakers, half of whom were bilingual Arabic-English speakers and half monolingual Arabic speakers. We utilized a combination of survey items and observational methods. The participants were asked questions on their Internet use and were observed searching the Internet on eight tasks. The results will tell us whether their self reported skill level or Internet knowledge or a combination of both are indicators of their performance on Internet searching tasks. Being able to accurately measure digital literacy levels is important for educational interventions designed to improve skills.

Keywords: Digital literacy, Arabic, Internet-searching skills, digital divide, self-reported measures, Web use

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Introduction

The digital divide is no longer a matter of just a matter of whom has accessibility to technology; but it also of concern is the gap between those who are able to utilize technology effectively and those who lack the skills and the knowledge needed to do so (Bonfadelli, 2002). In regards to the Internet, it's problematic to assume that simply having access equates to the ability to use the Web successfully, although such assumptions are often made (Hargittai, 2010). It is important to identify whether people who have access to the wealth of information and resources available online can actually find them or not. Such knowledge is necessary to plan educational interventions for example.

Eszter Hargittai measured digital literacy levels via developing tasks that she asked the participants to perform online (Hargittai, 2005). She also took into consideration their self-reported Internet skill level, asked them knowledge-based items on computer and Internet related terms and inquired about demographic information. The results of her multiple studies on monolingual, English speakers in the United States have opened a discussion on self-reported measures as the task completion rates were not as highly correlated with what the participants reported to be their skill level to be as was their knowledge of the Internet.

Other scholars have measured digital literacy levels on individuals in other countries. Research in the Netherlands on citizen's access of government related services on the Internet have shown that many people don't have the skills to find and utilize the information and tools provided by the government online (van Deursen & van Kijk, 2009). This shows that there is an issue of the digital divide in non-English languages like Dutch.

Research on the digital divide has attempted to explore the relationship between digital literacy, Internet-use and demographic elements. Some scholars have studied the relationship between age and Internet use and discovered that younger generations tend to be more socially networked and use the Internet more frequently (Gui & Argentin, 2009). Younger participants also seemed to be more capable of finishing tasks on a wide range of topics more than older participants however they still struggle finding some information online (Hargittai, 2006). In a further break down of searching tasks, younger individuals were better at formal searching and using tools, while there wasn't a difference between ages in the ability to perform tasks that required strategic searching and knowledge about the information provided online (van Deursen & van Kijk, 2011).

Education levels contribute to the digital divide with lower educational attainment relating to lower levels of digital literacy (van Deursen & van Kijk, 2009). Gender is a variable that matters in studies done outside the US. In Italy, males tended to be more digitally literate than women were (Gui, & Argentin, 2009)) while in the US, men and women did not vary in digital literacy levels but men showed a higher tendency of over estimating their Internet-searching skills (Hargittai, 2006). Time spent on the Internet and years of experience are related to more knowledge about the Internet and familiarity with using the searching tools (Hargittai & Hinnant, 2008).

As there is an abundance of content online, it comes in many languages to cater to everyone's language skills and limitations. However, the amount of content that online varies with language (Gao, Blitzer, Zhou & Wong, 2009) with English penetrating 43.4% of the Web according to Internet World Stats (2010), with Chinese close behind. Arabic speaking Web users are estimated to be 65.4 million, ranking 7th in World. However, very little research exists on Arabic Web users.

Our research will therefore explore Arabic-speaking Web users. We will explore whether Arabic users' self-reported skill level or knowledge of the Internet best predict their digital literacy levels. We adopted Hargittai's model (2005) and developed searching tasks that can be found in English and Arabic and require a range of particular searching skills.

Method

Participants

Our study aims to target Arabic speakers thus, participants were required to be regular Internet users and are familiar with utilizing the computer for that function. In order to gather this sample, we use several methods including convenience and snowball sampling and later on asked a recruiting company to screen and bring in more participants into the study. A screening process was used to filter out non-Arabic and people who were not regular Internet users. We asked questions about the languages they can speak, read and type and asked about the number of hours they spend on the Internet weekly. We defined a regular user of the Internet as someone who on average spends at least one hour on the Web, per week. In total, seventy-seven participants joined the study. Seven of the participants were removed from the study due to technical issues with their video and audio files that prevented us from analyzing their data.

The final sample included 35 bilingual Arabic-English speakers and 35 monolingual Arabic speakers, for a total of 70 participants. The participants, although all are residents of Qatar, are diverse. There are 28 Qataris, 15 Jordanians, 7 Syrians, 5 Egyptians, 3 Palestinians, 3 Lebanese, 2 Britons, 2 Iraqis, and one participant from each of the following countries: Sudan, Kuwait, Iran, Australia and Djibouti. The gender of the participants was roughly evenly distributed between the two groups with 33 men and 37 women. The participants were diverse on age $M = 23.4$ ($SD = 6.75$). The majority are single, 83%, and the rest are either married, 16%, or 1% divorced. They are reasonably well educated, with 12% not completing high school, 26% finishing high school, 43% currently in college, and 20% having completed bachelor's degree.

Development of Knowledge Items in Arabic

Hargittai (2005) designed a test of knowledge of Internet related terms. The purpose of the test is to determine how familiar people are with the terms, which can then be used to predict their digital literacy levels. The items included questions on blogs, tagging, malware, bookmarklets, phishing, torrents, podcasting and many other terms and concepts. To test Arabic speaking Web-user, we had to translate the terms into Arabic or find their equivalent meaning. This task was challenging given that a lot of

these terms don't have a corresponding meaning in Arabic. For instance, the term Phishing is "التصيد" in Arabic which means fishing for a fish. Terms like search engine have a literal translation of "محرك البحث" which is unpopular and could confuse Arabic users. Concepts like torrents are also meaningless once translated into their Arabic antonyms, "سيل" and do not convey their use on the Web. Some words like bookmarklet can't be given a translation due to the lack of a meaning associated with the words in the Arabic language. Therefore a lot of these terms were transliterated, such as "بوك ماركلت" to insure that misunderstandings do not occur.

Internet-Searching Tasks

Digital literacy was operationalized as the ability to successfully locate information on the Internet. Based on Hargittai's (2005, 2009) research on English American speakers. We adopted Hargittai's tasks when we could, revising some to be culturally appropriate. For some tasks this was not possible so similar tasks were created. In addition, all tasks could be completed in either Arabic or English, requiring some new tasks. The first task requires a price comparison between the different cellular providers in Qatar, our research site. To answer this task, the participant must be able to find and search for specific information on a company's website by visiting different sections or pages or using the search bar. The second task is a question on imported American food products in Qatar. The content on this topic is very limited on the Internet and fairly challenging. However, it only requires a good use of keywords and the ability of the user to distinguish between facts on websites designed to guide consumers to these products and locals opinion on Internet forums.

The third and sixth tasks were created to identify whether residents in Qatar are aware of e-government tools. The questions ask the participants to find a method to pay for their traffic violations and find a way to get an exit permit. The fourth task asked the participants to find a way to attend a Broadway show in New York city. This task tests the familiarity with online shopping, for tickets in this case, and finding information on specific information like the title of the shows and when will they be performed. The fifth task is a two part question where participants must find information on the 2012 summer Olympics and find the age of the youngest Qatari female athlete who attended the games. This task required the participants to have the searching skill to be able to find accurate information on a topic that has a lot of content of the Internet. The participants must be able to go back and forth between different search results to confirm the ages of the female athletes. The final two tasks asked about information that would be used when traveling, in this case to Oslo. The first task asks them to find a way from the main train station in Oslo to the university of Oslo. They first have to find the name of the station and then be able to use Google Maps. The second task requires them to find a book on economics while in Oslo. Here, the participants could use translation tools like Google Translate to find more results in Norwegian that could contain a bigger range of bookstores.

Procedure

After creating the tasks, the researchers, who are bilingual, trained to be able to communicate the questions fluently and clearly in both Arabic and English. The training also involved developing ways of engaging the participants in a conversation to encourage them to explain their thought processes as they went about completing

the tasks. This will enrich the data we are gathering on their digital literacy levels and assist us in categorizing the different forms of digital literacy skills that they have.

After two weeks of training, data collection began in April 2013. The participants were contacted prior to the interview session and were informed about the location of the lab and were given contact information to be able to communicate with the researchers. Data collection took place in a campus research lab. The computer set up was designed to mimic an environment similar to a home to ensure that the participants were comfortable. The room was decorated and refreshments were provided. Two long tables were placed adjacent to the wall; one was designed to look like a work-desk where files were labeled and saved, and the other was set with two laptops on it. Two chairs were placed on each side of the laptop. An external keyboard and mouse were provided in case the participants needed them to use the computer. The laptops were a standard PC, equipped with four different most commonly used Internet browsers, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, Safari and Mozilla Firefox. Hypercam, a screen-recording software program was also installed to screen capture the participants' searches. Two external audio recorders were also placed in different positions to record the conversation.

The participants were screened and introduced to the study prior to the data collection session mainly via phone. They were then guided to the location of the lab and were greeted by the researcher in front of the reception desk of the building. They were then asked to come to the lab where the researcher asked them if they needed refreshments or wanted to use the facilities. Only the researcher and the participant were allowed into the lab once the session began. The participants were instructed that the session would take an average of 90 minutes and that mobile phones should be silenced or turned off during that time. We created a checklist to insure that all steps needed to gather and save the data were duplicated exactly for all participants. The researcher first asked the participant to sign a consent form that informs the participants that their data will not be linked to their names as ID numbers will be used and that an audio of the session and a screen-shot will be recorded to analyze the data. If the participants did not want to sign they were make a verbal consent or choose not to participate.

The first part of the session was an oral survey. The researcher asked the participants about their typical Internet use. The self-rating digital skill item was included here. The answer options were provided on laminated cards to assist the participant. The researcher recorded the participants' verbal answers. This part of the session was audio recorded. The second part of the session consists of the Internet-searching segment. Audio recording as well as screen recording took place in this part of the session. The participant was asked to face the computer and position themselves comfortably. They were then instructed to use the Internet browser that they usually use or are most familiar with. They are then asked to find out the answers of the eight tasks. Once they finished the tasks the participants were then asked to fill out a small survey asking questions on their prior knowledge and familiarity with the tasks. They were then instructed to fill out a post-survey online. The post-survey included questions on demographics, languages spoken, computer use and the knowledge test on Internet-related terms. The participants were then asked some follow up questions by the researcher to further clarify what they did during the searching session. The participants were then paid and released from the study.

Discussion

Data is currently being translated and transcribed into English. We have coded task completion into three categories based on if they fully completed the tasks, partially completed the tasks or couldn't complete them. We have also combined the knowledge items test into a scale.

Once the data is fully transcribed we will code the Internet-searching skills. Some of these we have identified include keywords skills, where participants can create keywords that will lead them to the desired search. Utilizing search engines on websites is another skill, where search engines on databases are used differently than encyclopedias or commercial websites. Use of translating tools is another skill that is particularly useful when trying to find information on the tasks in other languages. Knowing how to access e-government Web services is useful in finding specific local information. Maps and apps are Internet services that can really aid in finding information faster but the participants must have knowledge about their usage. In addition, the capability to read and distinguish between reliable and questionable information on the Web helps participants find accurate information to be able to complete their tasks.

The results will give us an insight on how Arabic speaking Internet users find information on the Web. Distinguishing the different forms of skills will also help us in identifying the set of skills that people lack and therefore implement in training programs to raise digital literacy levels.

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***Supervision Matters: Teenagers' Perception
of Parents' Involvement in Their Internet Use***

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Abstract

With the growing popularity of digital devices, Internet has become an integral part of teenagers' daily life. As teenagers are in a complicated period of development, parents struggle in supervising their use of the internet. This study takes the teenagers' standpoint and explores how the teenagers perceive their parents' involvement in their Internet use. Survey was conducted towards teenagers in UAE, which has the highest penetration of digital devices in the Gulf region as well as one of the highest in the world. The results showed that girls usually receive more supervision from parents' than boys. The older the teenagers are and the more they depend on the Internet, the more they perceive parents' supervision to be beneficial. However, not enough supervision has been given to those who access the Internet more frequently. The findings indicate more parents' supervision is needed from the teenagers' point of view. Discussions are made from psychological and socio-cultural perspectives and suggestions for future research are presented.

Keywords: Internet use, teenager, parents, supervision

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Introduction

As we are all experiencing now that with the growing popularity of digital devices, such as computers, laptops, smart phones and tablets, the Internet can now be accessed with almost any content, from anywhere, and at anytime. Teenagers today are the generations that grow up with the Internet. For them, the Internet has become an integral part of their daily life for almost everything, including information, education, entertainment and socialization (Gross, 2004; Hamdan et al., 2013; Valentine & Holloway, 2002; Wang, Bianchi, & Raley, 2005). On one hand, the Internet provides useful resources for teenagers to explore the world, do well in their school projects and socialize in the virtual world, on the other hand the heavy use of the Internet also raises parents' concerns of some negative impacts physically and psychologically, such as exposure to inappropriate content and people, cyber bullying, physical inactivity, social isolation, and other related health problems such as obesity and depression (Kraut et al., 2002; S. Livingstone & Helsper, 2009a; Sonia Livingstone, 2003; Sorbring, 2012).

The focus of this research on teenagers especially is because teenagers use Internet more frequently and extensively than younger children. A recent survey conducted by GfK in 2013 in US showed that teenagers' spent more than 4 hours per day using the Internet and this time grew 37% since 2012, faster than that of any other key age groups. The teens' increases were driven by huge leaps in their time spent online via tablets, smartphones, and even connected TVs. Their data showed that smartphone ownership among the 13 to 17 group jumped from 35% to 55% and tablet ownership doubled from 18% to 37% since 2012 ("Teens' Time Spent Online," 2014). This study was conducted in United Arab Emirates (UAE). UAE has a large population of young people with over 50% below 24, among them are teenagers. In recent years, the growth of digital devices in UAE has been the highest in GCC countries and one of the highest in the world. According to a study by Dubai Press Club ("Arab Media Outlook 2011-2015," 2014), 78% of the UAE people own a laptop, 66% own a smart phone, 47% own a PC-desktop, 21% own a tablet and 11% own a smart/connected TV (Figure 1).

More importantly, teenagers are in a complicated period of development. As teenagers are no longer young children, they tend to be more independent and have more self-control. They usually dislike too much control from their parents (Eccles et al., 1993; Sun, 1995). Regarding the Internet use, although many parents feel uncertain and unease about their teenage children's actions and experiences on the Internet, they struggle in supervising them properly and effectively (Kirwil, 2009; Lin, Lin, & Wu, 2009). As parents of teenagers, it is not easy to keep a good balance between two things: to respect their children's autonomy and freedom of choice by not supervising everything all the time, and to come up with strategies to make them follow family rules and values in using the Internet (Eastin et al., 2006; Sorbring & Lundin, 2012; Sorbring, 2012). Also, as the technologies are developing at an unstoppable speed, many parents have far lagged knowledge and skills in using the Internet than their teenager children, therefore lack the ability to supervise (Livingstone, 2003; Sorbring, 2012; Wang et al., 2005). Besides, the easy access of the Internet through mobile devices e.g. smartphones and tablets, which are commonly owned by the teenagers today makes the supervision even harder for parents (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, & Ólafsson, 2011).

Many previous studies focused on the parents' perspective and explored how parents supervise their children's Internet use; such as setting family rules, monitoring time and content of use, parents' active participation in teenagers' internet activities, installing monitoring software etc (Eastin et al., 2006; Kyung, Yop, & Bum, 2009; Lin & Yu, 2008; Livingstone & Helsper, 2009b; Wang et al., 2005). For example, Eastin et al. (2006) investigated how four types of parenting: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful, influence their mediation including using interpretive, co-viewing, technological, and restrictive techniques to monitor teenagers' Internet use. However, most of them find that the various forms of mediation strategies from parents' are reported to be ineffective from teenagers. Fleming et al. (2006) surveyed 692 Australian teenagers and found the use of blocking or filtering software from parents' control did not lead to significant differences in their children' exposure to inappropriate content. Livingstone & Helsper (2009b) conducted a national survey of 1511 children and 906 parents in UK and found that parents' mediation strategies, which favoring active co-use and interaction rules over technical restrictions using filters or monitoring software, were not necessarily effective in reducing risks the teenagers encounter online.

Other research that examined both parents' and teenagers' views revealed consistent discrepancy between parents' and teenagers' report regarding the parents' supervision on the Internet. Turow and Nir (2000) found that when pairs of parents and children were interviewed, there is disagreement on whether parents' ever discussed the Internet use with their children. Wang et al. (2005) also found that there is discrepancy between parents and teenagers on Internet monitoring, about one third of the parents who said they have rules on Internet use but the teens say there are none . These findings indicate that parents and teenagers define, experience and demand the Internet supervision quite differently. Interestingly, in Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak's (2003) research, it is found that parents' reports of the installation of monitoring software did not predict lower exposure to unwanted sexual material, while teens' reports of the installation of such software predicted less exposure to unwanted sexual material. This confirms our belief that as teenagers are more mature and independent, parents' involvement can only be effective when it meets the teenagers' understanding, acceptance and appreciation. So it is important to know what and how the teenagers view their parents' involvement in their Internet use.

In this regard, this study aims to explore teenagers' perception of their parents' Internet supervision: whether they believe it is effective and beneficial and what factors that affect their perceptions. The main research questions include:

RQ1: What is the teenagers' perception of their parents' supervision in the Internet use?

RQ2: What are the factors that affect their parents' supervision in the Internet use?

RQ3: What is the teenagers' perception of benefits from their parents' supervision?

RQ4: What are the factors that affect teenager's perception of benefits from their parents' supervision?

According to previous studies, a couple of factors have been identified and discussed regarding parents' supervision on teenagers' Internet use.

Internet Use.

Parents' concern about teenagers' Internet use includes how long and how often teenagers use the internet, what content they are exposed to, what activities and interactions they are having online. It is proved that the higher frequency of teenagers' Internet use is linked to greater levels of worry on parents (Sorbring, 2012). Those worry are mainly about their children being exposed to dangerous people and material containing pornographic, violent, distressing content, experiencing bullying or threats, giving away private information, and becoming target of commercialism (Gross, 2004; Hamdan et al., 2013; S. Livingstone & Helsper, 2009a; Livingstone, 2003). In UAE, the internet is relative safe for teenagers since the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, which was established under UAE Federal Law, controls and supervises the content online. A list of inappropriate content is banned including pornography, politically sensitive material, and anything against the perceived moral values of the UAE. However, this doesn't prohibit the risks that teenagers may encounter online (Hamdan et al., 2013).

Internet Dependency.

In some studies, the term Internet addiction is used referring to the excessive use of the internet (Kyung, Yop, & Bum, 2009b; Lin et al., 2009). However, this study uses a more neutral term Internet Dependency as adapted from the concept of media dependency. In Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur's (1976) media dependency theory, they believed that the stronger the dependency on the media, the more likely it will have an impact on people's cognition, affect, and behaviour. In the case of the Internet, the easy access and the richness of the content meets almost all the need of teenagers. The more dependency on the Internet, the more it affects the teenagers' attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, we would like to see how Internet Dependency affects teenagers' perception of being monitored by their parents.

Age.

Earlier research has showed that age affects parents' supervision of Internet use. Studies in different countries have come up with consist results that older teens receive less supervision from parents than younger ones (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009b; Sorbring, 2012; Wang et al., 2005). From the report of parents, those parents of younger children are more worried that their teenager will come into contact with dangerous people and violent, distressed or uncomfortable content (Sorbring, 2012). This is quite comprehensible as the older the teenagers are, the more independence and self-control they have, facilitating parents to reduce supervision and rely more on their self-efficacy.

Gender.

Gender has been proved to be an influencing factor on parents' supervision (Kyung et al., 2009; Chien-Hsin Lin et al., 2009; S. Livingstone & Helsper, 2009b; Sorbring & Lundin, 2012; Sorbring, 2012; Wang et al., 2005). Gender differences are reflected in teenagers' different activities online, e.g. boys are more interested in games while girls are keen on social networking (Buti, Saleh, Sara, & Rajan, 2011; Gross, 2004), therefore they are encountering different risks accordingly. It is natural that parents'

concern and worry also differ between girls and boys. Sorbring (2012) found that parents are more worried that the girls, rather than the boys, will be subjected to bullying, come into contact with dangerous people and distressful and uncomfortable content. For boys, parents have more worry that they will become passive and inactive in using the Internet. Since parents have different perceptions of boys' and girls' activities and what is suitable, it might make parents think and act differently depending on the child's gender. So when it comes to teenagers' perception of parents' supervision, it is not surprising that there is difference from boys' and girls' report of being monitored. Livingstone & Helsper found (2009b) that girls perceiving themselves to receive more mediation than boys though in the same study parents did not perceive a gender difference in their action.

Most of the studies are conducted in Western and East Asian countries; few were carried out in the Middle East, especially in countries like UAE, which has the fastest growth of digital device and a large population of teenagers. More insight of teenagers' Internet use and perception is valuable to ensure the effectiveness of parents' invention and to protect the teenagers from risks online.

Methods

Survey method was used in this study. The Population for the survey is teenagers in UAE. Given the realistic concern of the implausibility of obtaining a probability sample of the UAE population for this experimental study, convenient sampling method was used. Survey questionnaire was distributed by Emirati students through their family and extended family members whose age fall within 13-19. Both hard copy and soft copy were distributed in November, 2013. In total, 50 questionnaires were collected. Among the respondents, 40% aged 13-15 and 60% aged 16-19, with 48% boys and 52% girls.

Independent variables.

Internet use. The variable of Internet use is measured by time, content and purpose. For time, the respondents were asked "How much time do you spend on the Internet?" The answer is listed as "A. Less than an hour, B. 1-2 Hour, C. 3-4 hour, and D. More". The questions for content include: "What do you use on the Internet?" Answers range from "A. Games, B. Video, C. Search engines, D. Social media, and E. Others, please specify." For online socialization, questions were asked about "Have you made any friends through the Internet?" and "Do you trust having friends through the Internet?" Each of the question is scaled from 1 to 3 with 1 for never and 3 for all the time. In case of online commercials, they are asked about "How do you normally behave when pop-up advertisements appear on your screen?" Three behaviours are listed to choose from: A. I click it. B. I ignore it. C. I close it. The question "Why do you use the Internet?" was asked for the purpose of using the Internet,

Internet dependency. Two questions were asked about dependency on the Internet, one is "How often do you feel the need to check the Internet daily?" and the other is "Do you consider yourself an Internet fanatic?" Both answers are scaled from 1 to 3, with 1 for never, 2 for sometimes and 3 for all the time. For the first question, 60% of the respondents said they feel the need to check the Internet all the time.

Dependent variables.

Perception of Parents' supervision is measured by asking "Does your parents checks on what you access through the Internet?" The answers are scaled from 1 to 3, with 1 as never and 3 all the time.

Perception of benefit from parents' supervision is measured by asking "Does your parents' involvement in your internet access benefit you in anyway?" with the answer also scaled from 1 to 3.

Data Analysis.

Based on the research design, T-test was conducted to explore the gender difference in parents' supervision of the Internet use. To investigate how Internet use and Internet dependency affect teenagers' perception of benefits from parents' Internet supervision, correlation was performed based on the available data. Because of the limited sample size, simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to explore how Internet Use, Internet Dependence, age and gender can affect perception of parents' supervision and its benefits. At this stage, the variable of gender was dummy coded with male as 1 and female as 0, so it can be added in the regression analysis and be interpreted accordingly.

Results

Descriptive Results

Internet Use. 64% of the teenagers spent more than 3 hours online daily. Regarding teenagers' access of content and activities online, the data showed that social media was used the most with 38% of teenagers choose that answer, followed by watching videos 26% and using search engines 24%, the least goes to games with 12%. In case of socialization online, 82% of the teenagers reported they made friends online. 62% of them do trust online relationship. However, the teenagers don't prefer to interactive with their family online, with 70% still prefer to communicate with their family members face to face. Looking at commercial information online, it is surprising to find that 90% of respondents choose to view the link of pop-up advertisement, showing their high vulnerability of being targeted by commercialization.

Internet Dependency. For the question "How often do you feel the need to check the Internet daily?" 60% of the respondents said they feel the need to check the Internet all the time. When asked "Do you consider yourself an Internet fanatic?" 84% answered yes, indicating there is high dependency on the Internet among teenagers.

Parents Supervision and its Benefits. It seems that the parents' control and supervision of Internet is quite weak in the society of UAE as perceived from teenagers. The majority of the teenagers (84%) reported that there is no parents' supervision on their Internet use, 16% said that their parents supervise their Internet use occasionally and only 2% said that their parents check their online behavior all the time (Figure 2). Regarding teenagers' perception of the benefits from their parents' Internet supervision, most teenagers (84%) reported that it is never beneficial, only about 16% reported it benefits them sometimes (Figure 3).

Explanatory Results

T-test was performed to test the gender differences on the perception of parents' supervision and its benefit. Significant gender differences were found in parents' supervision of the Internet use. The means for boys and girls were $M=1.04(SD=0.20)$ and $M=1.35(SD=0.56)$ respectively, $t(df)=-2.59, p<.05$ with girls' higher than boys', which indicates that the parents' supervision is more on teenage girls than boys as reported by teenagers. However, no significance was found between their perceptions of benefits of parents' supervision (Table 1).

Correlation was conducted to explore the factors that affect the perception of parents' Internet supervision. Significant correlation results were found among 3 pairs of variables (Table 2).

First, it showed that *frequency to access the Internet* was significantly and negatively correlate with *perception of parents' supervision*, $r(50) = -.40, p<.01$, which means the more frequent the teenager access the internet, the less parents supervision was given to them.

Second, *Internet dependency* was significantly and positively correlation with *perception of benefits from parents' supervision*, $r(50) = .38, p<.01$, which means the more they depend on the internet, the more they perceive their parents' supervision to be beneficial.

Third, *Perception of benefits from parents' supervision* was found to have a significant and positive correlation with *age*, $r(50) = .36, p<.05$, meaning that the older the teenagers are, the more they perceive their parents' supervision to be beneficial.

Multiple regression found that the model containing the predictors on perception of parents' supervision was significant, $R^2 = .30, F(7, 42) = 2.64, p<.05$ (Table 3). Two variables, *frequency to access the internet* and *gender* are two significant predictors. For the variable of *frequency to access the internet*, the direction is negative, which means the frequent access to the Internet predicts less parents' supervision. This result is consistent with the findings from correlation analysis in that *frequency to access the Internet* is negatively correlation with parents' supervision. It showed that *gender* is also a negative predictor of parents' supervision. As boys are coded as 1 and girls coded as 0, the result indicates that the boys' perceived less supervision from their parents, a finding that also echoed what was found from the T-test, in which girls reported more supervision from parents. No significant predictors were found in the model of predicting perception of benefits' from parents supervision.

Discussion

Given the wide ownership of digital devices among the teenagers in UAE, it is disturbing to find that the majority of the parents are not supervising their teenagers' Internet use as reported from their children. Nor do they think their supervision is beneficial. The percentage of the parents that monitor their teenager children's Internet in this study is far more below that in Western and East Asian countries. A study in UK (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009b) found that parents attempt a fair degree of regulation for teenagers. In another study in European Union, about one third of the

parents reported applying a variety of measures to ensure their children's safety online (Livingstone et al., 2011). However, there is only one study in US that reported the similar level of deficiency in parents' supervision (Stahl & Fritz, 2002), but the research was conducted more than ten years ago. Hamdan et al.'s (2013) study in UAE showed a bit higher percentage of parents' supervision which is 29%. The variation may be caused by the regional differences in the sample since the economy and culture is quite different from one emirate to the other in the country. Future study with a more complete sample in each emirate of UAE is suggested to gain a complete understanding of the parents' supervision of the Internet use in the country.

The fact that parents' supervision is relatively weak in UAE can be explained by a few reasons. First, UAE has an interesting combination of modernity and tradition. On one hand, the high per capita income in the country makes the ownership and updating of digital devices very common among young people; on the other hand the tradition of keeping big family size, usually more than 5 kids per couple, makes it hard for parents to spare as much time and energy on each kid as that in other societies. Second, there is also the problem of digital gap between the parents and their teenager kids. As noted by many scholars, parents may not be as fast as their teenager kids in learning and updating knowledge and skills of using the Internet, therefore, lack the ability to supervise their kids effectively (Wang et al., 2005). The various devices and applications to access the Internet make parents' supervision even harder. Last but not the least reason that reduced parents' concern may lie in their belief that the Internet is relatively safe in UAE. A list of various Internet content is prohibited under the UAE's policy including content for learning criminal skills, gambling, illegal drugs, hacking, pornography, and more ("Prohibited Content Categories," n.d.).

The findings showed that among those who perceived to have parents' supervision, more girls than boys reported being supervised. Gender is an important predictor of perception of parents' supervision, however no gender difference is found in perceiving whether the supervision is beneficial or not. In previous studies that surveyed to the teenagers, males reported to have more exposure to inappropriate material or behaviors online (Fleming et al., 2006). From surveys to the parents, many find that parents usually worry more about boys than girls, for example, in a survey towards over 500 mothers of teenagers in US, Eastin et al. (2006) found that moms place more time and content restrictions on younger males than females. Even though boys are believed to encounter more risks due to their preferences in online activities hence raise more parents' concern, girls reported to have more parents' supervision than boys when referring to actually supervision actions from parents (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009b). It is natural that parents care more about their teenager girls' exposure to dangerous people in the virtual world (Sorbring, 2012), especially in a society like UAE where female's privacy is highly valued and protected. It is believed that any inappropriate exposure may impair the reputation of the girl and the family. In order to protect their girls and make them follow the values of the society, parents are expected to put more supervision and restriction on girls than boys.

Due to the lack of parents' supervision on Internet use, it is not surprising to see that most teenagers reported there is no benefit from their parents supervision, a result more depressing than in other areas. For example, a study in EU showed that teenagers are generally positive about their parents' supervision with over two thirds

say it is helpful (S. Livingstone et al., 2011). Among those who did perceive the benefits from their parents' intervention, more older teenagers than younger ones who reported so. Given that many studies proved that parents usually gave more supervision on younger teenagers than older ones (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009b; Sorbring, 2012; Wang et al., 2005), the findings in this study indicates that the more mature the teenagers are, the more understanding they have towards their parents' intervention. It is also find that for those teenagers who claim to be more dependent on the Internet, they perceive parents' supervision to be more beneficial, indicating that when the teenagers aware that they are out of self-control, they do need parents' intervention and help. However less parents' supervision was given to those who use the Internet more frequently. As frequency of Internet access is proved to be a predictor for parents' supervision, it calls our attention that more supervision should be given to those who tend to get addicted in using the Internet. Scholars found that families play an important role in preventing Internet addiction (Kyung et al., 2009; Chien-Hsin Lin et al., 2009; S. Livingstone et al., 2011), so more programs should be considered by schools, policymakers and social workers to enhance parents' involvement in their children's Internet use.

The limited sample size may affect the generalization of the findings in this study; however it casts insights into the parents' and teenagers' attitudes and actions towards the Internet use in UAE. We have reached an important understanding that parents' supervision really matters as it is appreciated by those older and more mature teenagers and those who feel lack of self-control; it is also missed and needed by those who use Internet more frequently. A good communication, understanding and appreciation between parents and teenagers is the key to ensure the best use of the Internet.

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Table 1 Independent T-test for Perception Parents' Supervision and its Benefits

Variables	Gender		t value	df	Significance
	Male mean (& SD)	Female mean (& SD)			
Perception of Parents' supervision	1.04 (0.20)	1.35 (0.56)	-2.59	32	p<.05
Perception of Benefits from Parents' supervision	1.17 (0.38)	1.15 (0.37)	0.12	48	ns

Table 2 Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Internet Use, Internet Dependence and Perception of Parents' Supervision and its Benefits

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Internet Use							
1. How much time do you spent on the Internet?	.19	-.28*	.51**	.11	-.23	.07	-.17
2. Have you made any friends on the Internet?		.32*	.05	.06	-.09	.09	.00
3. Do you trust having friends on the Internet?			-.34*	-.01	-.03	-.01	-.09
4. How often do you need to check the internet daily?				.11	-.40**	.06	-.15
Internet Dependence							
5. Do you consider yourself an Internet fanatic?					-.12	.38**	.36*
6. Perception of parents' supervision						-.01	-.09
7. Perception of benefits of parents' supervision							.36*
8. Age							

** $p < .01$ (2-tailed) * $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Table 3 Simultaneous Multiple Regression of the Factors on Perceptions of Parents' Supervision

Factors	Beta	t
Internet Use		
1. How much time do you spent on the Internet?	-.03	-.17
2. Have you made any friends on the Internet?	-.08	-.52
3. Do you trust having friends on the Internet?	-.10	-.64
4. How often do you need to check the internet	-.44	-2.82**
Internet Dependence		
5. Do you consider yourself an Internet fanatic?	.04	.31
Age	-.13	-.92
Gender	-.35	-2.45*
<i>F</i>	2.64*	
<i>dfs</i>	7,42	
<i>R</i> ²	.30	
<i>n</i>	50	

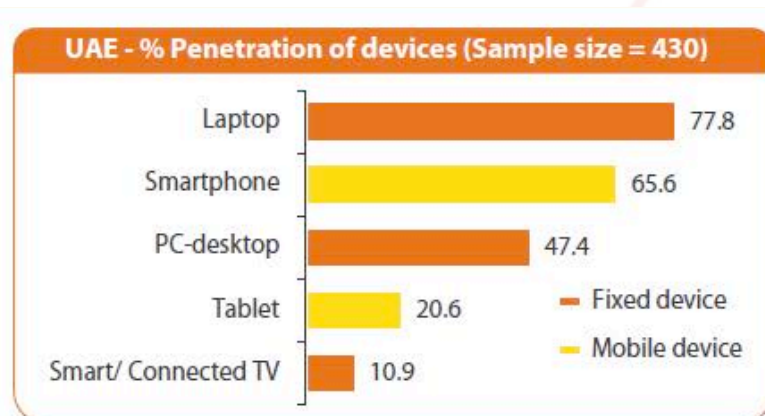
** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

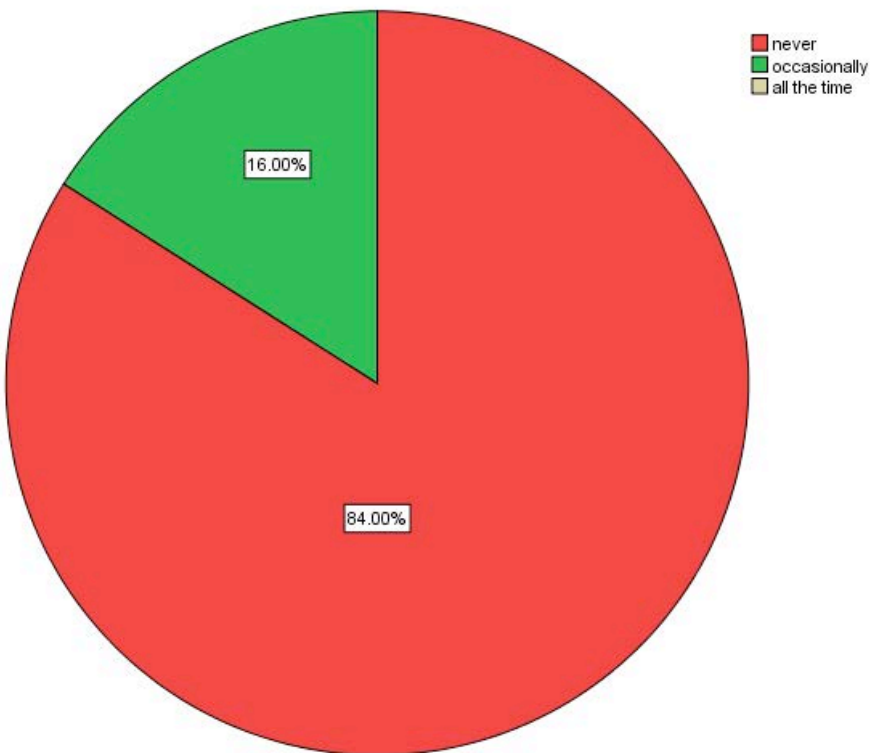
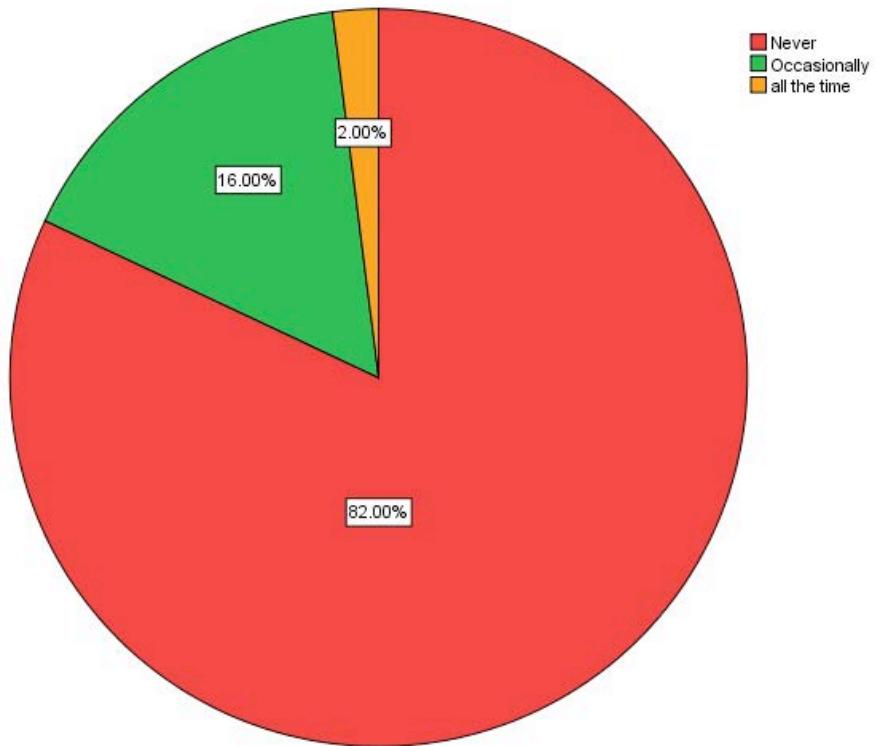
Figure Captions

Figure 1 Digital devices owned by individuals in UAE (Source: Arab Media Outlook 2011~2015)

Figure 2 Teenagers' Perception of Parents' Supervision

Figure 3 Teenagers' Perception of Benefits from Parents' Supervision





***Media Construction of Apocalypse:
Halley's comet and the end of Mayan
calendar through the lens of discourse analysis***

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Abstract

The research paper deals with media representation of apocalyptic predictions. It aims to describe how the apocalypse is represented / constructed in media discourse and what functions can the apocalyptic predictions perform. The theoretical background is highly interdisciplinary: the research was formed and inspired by concepts of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology and by the historical context of the apocalyptic visions, including contemporary theories of collapse. Moreover, the paper connects classic anthropological conceptualisations of ritual, as well as the psychoanalytical/sociological notion of ontological security, to the media-apocalyptic seriality. The research paper employs discourse analytical approach suggested by James Paul Gee, enhanced by selected Jungian categories, for in-depth comparative analysis of printed and online media texts focused on the return of Halley's comet in 1910 and the end of Mayan calendar in 2012. The paper suggests that – by various forms of ritualizing the apocalyptic events' prediction – the media have the potential to symbolically revitalize the society and strengthen ontological security of its members. The objects of prediction (the comet and the calendar in this case) can actually serve as objects of projection of collectively unconscious anxieties, activated by social-political context. However, the research suggests that the media discourse on apocalypse articulates a historically invariable cause of the apocalypse – the self-destructive tendencies of the human race.

Keywords: apocalypse, apocalyptic prediction, collapse, Jung, collective unconscious, projection, discourse analysis

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Introduction

„Disappointed the world didn't end? Fret not, there's another apocalypse on the way...“ the website of *Daily Mirror* assured on December 21st 2012 (Mirror.co.uk 2012/12/21). The electronic version of *The Independent* entertained its audience by the headline „Viking apocalypse: End of the world predicted to happen on Saturday (but don't cancel your weekend plans yet)“ (Independent.co.uk 2014/2/19). The same apocalyptic event had been mediatized also by the online version of a popular Czech weekly *Reflex* at the end of November 2013: „A new date of the end of the World has been set, 22nd February 2014, when an apocalypse comes according to Vikings“ (Reflex.cz 2013/11/30). Apparently, humankind managed to survive both the predicted events. However, these examples alert us that predictions of the end of the world are a globally widespread and regularly occurring media and social phenomenon.

This paper examines discursive construction/representation¹ of apocalyptic visions in the media. The aim of the paper is to shine new light on these predictions, to pose and address the question why they occur with most probably increasing frequency: is there any pleading or urgent message behind their frequent occurrence and beyond their literal sense?

This study was exploratory and interpretative in nature, based on analyzing media coverage of two events that triggered the media discourse about the possibility of the end of the world: the return of Halley's comet near the Earth in 1910, when a collision of the two celestial bodies and/or contamination of the Earth's atmosphere by cyan in the comet's tail was predicted by astronomers (among others, by influential Camille Flammarion), and the end of Mayan calendar in December 2012, when various forms of catastrophe were expected by visionaries and thousands of their followers². The research aims at (1) grasping discursive mechanisms of media construction of apocalypse; (2) the descriptive level of analysis in combination of several interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives should offer some insight into the relation of the apocalyptic visions in media to crises of complex societies. Moreover, the discursive comprehension will enable me to (3) discuss the question whether and how media construct the causes of the predicted apocalypse and methods of its delay as historically invariable.

After briefly outlining the interdisciplinary theoretical background of the research I shall put these goals in the concrete terms of research questions, emerging from the theoretical concepts and literature review. In the first part of the paper I shall also introduce particular type of discourse analysis, selected (and adjusted) as the method of studying media representation of apocalyptic predictions, and shortly mention the research sample. In the reminder of the paper I will present some of the main research

¹ The research is based on the constructivist approach to representation (see e.g. Hall 1997 and below) – therefore I am using the terms „representation“ and „construction“, both referring to meaning, as synonyms.

² I have chosen the two cases for two reasons: their time distance and different base and character of the predictions (i.e. astronomical versus mayistic/esoteric). The time distance and substantive difference of the events should allow keeping the comparison of media representation of apocalyptic prediction freed of homogeneity of the types of predicted apocalypse and their social-political circumstances.

findings with representative examples of the analysed media articles and, what is more important, I will point out several unexpected and potentially significant motives.

Theoretical-methodological base

Contexts of apocalypse

The idea of the end of the world - whether the universe, the Earth or the human civilization – and therefore also existence of media texts about the eschatological conception has proved to be historically universal in European and American civilization. The notion of the end of the world, usually followed by a new beginning, is firmly embodied in Jewish-Christian mythological tradition, and also codified in the *Books of Prophets* or the *Revelation of Saint John the Divine* (Bible 2012; Weber 1999; Delumeau 1999).

However, the notion of apocalypse is ideologically liquid: it tends to be filled with social and political content of the day. For example, in recent years, the Devil's trap has been believed to reside in new technologies such as microchips, satellites and bar codes, or in some forms of political-economical establishment, e.g. trusts and international organizations, introducing new level of Satan's capability to control people. The threat of an extensive ecological disaster brought about by human irresponsibility becomes another powerful driving force of apocalyptic predictions (Weber 1999). However, the ideological volatility does not mean that this secularized eschatology ceased to employ biblical and religious metaphors as well as traditional content – for instance, the late modern apocalyptic notions keep raising feelings of guilt and maintains the self-disciplinary appeal (in foucauldian sense) to the recipients of apocalyptic messages (Methmann – Rothe 2012). This unity in diversity inspires the question if – despite the ideological variability concerning the specific filling of the apocalyptic conception – there are some discursive mechanisms of construction of apocalyptic visions shared by media of different times, as well as the question whether and how the media construct any cause of apocalypse as historically invariable, spreading through different political and social settings.

As some writers (e.g. Delumeau 1999, Weber 1999) have observed, emerging rather regularly from thirteenth century on, the waves of eschatological fear expressed in predictions of the end of the world usually coincide with social and political crises such as riots, wars or epidemics. Thus, historiography suggests that mediated apocalyptic visions usually emerge more frequently in the societies that are having serious troubles (Weber 1999; Bárta 2011). Several major historians investigating collapses of complex societies - like Oswald Spengler (2010), Joseph Tainter (2009) or Jared Diamond (2008) – indeed share the conviction that the Western society is gradually drawing near the moment of collapse. The vivid scenarios (often similar to pop-cultural adaptations of the apocalyptic predictions) they depict, based on observing individual components of decline, not only suggest some factors that could intensify apocalyptic fear, but they can be also interpreted as an illustration of the fact that not even the scientific discourse avoids the expansion of the apocalyptic fear. However, with regard to the media, the question remains – do the mediated visions of the end of the world play any important role within the dialectics of collapse and regeneration of the complex society in which these visions appear?

Nevertheless, the question of role and function of media representation of apocalypse in connection of its social and political circumstances seems to be more complex. The apocalyptic fear as a modification of archaic fear (Rollo 1993) is a collectively unconscious content that must be necessarily projected – that is, transferred into external objects (Jacobi 1943; Jung 1981). The mechanism of projection, thoroughly examined by Carl Gustav Jung and his colleagues (for the cultural/collective dimension, see especially Jung 1990), is easily imaginable as concretization of archetypical characters (gods, demons) or their identification with living beings; likewise, projection is applicable to processes and situations. For example, projected/mythicized natural disasters or astronomical events are rather

...symbolic expressions of the inner, unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to man's consciousness by way of projection – that is, mirrored in the events of nature (Jung 1981: 6).

The main theoretical premise behind Jung's claim is that the late modern narratives about the return of Halley's comet and its effects on the Earth or about the fatal impact of the end of the Mayan calendar's cycle express rather a collectively unconscious aspect of social processes than a tangible, immediate threat. In other words, the apocalyptic pattern, the archetype of Death and Rebirth³, may manifest itself in media as the process of the end of the world, being

only formally determined, not in regard to their contents (...). (...) This implies then that the archetype is pre-existent and immanent as a potential "axial system". The solution in which the precipitate is formed, the experience of all humanity, creates the images that crystallize on this axial system and that fill themselves out in the womb of the unconscious to figures ever more distinct and rich in content (Jacobi 1943: 42-43).

Here Jolan Jacobi puts forward the view that the content of an archetype is changeable, although its essential structure remains constant, and implies that the actual shape of the archetype resonates with its social-political circumstances. This view further elaborates the notion of increasing frequency of apocalyptic visions during critical periods (see above). Indeed, the social-political circumstances in fact *activate* the archetype, because its realization is a form of instinctive, psychologically necessary response to empirically real social processes (Jacobi 1943). Thus, the analysis is expected to answer the question if, how and to what extent do the ways of discursive construction of apocalyptic visions suggest that the objects, supposedly having the apocalyptic capability (the comet and the calendar), could work as projection objects of collective unconscious tensions, activated by social-political conditions of the day.

Nevertheless, the question of function concerns not only the objects of predictions as such, but also media: what do the media texts, considering the mechanism of projection, serve for? Several psychoanalytically and anthropologically grounded analyses of popular culture propound the view that many media texts and products of popular culture may be reckoned as semantic analogies of myths, dreams and even

³The archetype of Death and Rebirth is a proto-type representing renovation, revitalization, improvement, the process of transformation, or change of the previous essential structure (Jung 2003).

rituals, as they employ mythic imagery (Jung 1990; Eliade 1975). This similarity, based on the observation that also contemporary media texts reproduce meanings of mythic structures, displaying the nature of collective psyche (Jung, 1981), may help to understand the role of apocalyptic visions in media: in the process of reading myths, including those that are transmitted by mass media, people are stepping out of time, leaving both personal lifetime and historical periods, immersing in trans-historical, mythic time. While experiencing myths, we are letting the sacred atmosphere to spread through ourselves, becoming “contemporaries” of sacred events, gods and heroes:

As a summary formula we might say that by “living” the myths one emerges from profane, chronological time and enters a time that is of different quality, a “sacred” Time at once primordial and indefinitely recoverable. (Eliade 1975: 18)

Thus, experiencing the apocalyptic myth may symbolically re-generate its participants; a person taking part in the ritual of the end of the world and its renewal becomes a coeval of this ritually mediated adventure, and so she or he starts her or his existence anew from the beginning (Eliade 2006). Attractiveness of the media predictions of ends of the world could be partly explained in the terms of the desire to experience different time rhythms, in terms of the revolt against historical time, in terms of the fight for the chance of getting rid of the burden of historical time that leads solely to death.

Surmounting the linearity of time, cyclic character and seriality is another feature of apocalyptic visions that helps to grasp the role of media representation of the end of the world. In her classic critique of the discourse about AIDS, Susan Sontag (1989) mentions the shift from expectant to continual apocalyptic threat:

Apocalypse is now a long-running serial: not "Apocalypse Now" but "Apocalypse From Now On." Apocalypse has become an event that is happening and not happening. (Sontag 1989: 88)

The media broadcast the apocalyptic series, periodically threaten with imminent doom, stemming from the hypertrophy of the features of modernity, simultaneously assuring of the absence of serious dangers, reproducing the grandiosity of modern states and the faith in their stability. As a result, this series may strengthen ontological security⁴ of its consumers, endangered by the apocalyptic content of the series: the alternation of safety and threat, risk and hope promotes the notion that every collapse and crisis is followed by regeneration and positive change. Moreover, the cyclic nature of media as such implies that the media is a phenomenon based on the comforting principle of consumption regularity and content continuity (Volek 1998; Kohoutek – Čermák 2009). Thus, paradoxically enough, it seems that the media contents with apocalyptic or catastrophic theme could be involved in the reconstruction of ontological security in two different manners: for one thing, owing to their generally indestructible, omnipresent and cyclic character (or their continual from), and for another, because of the constant claiming and disclaiming concrete predictions of the end of the world (or the series content).

⁴ Anthony Giddens (1991) uses the term in the sense of trust in the reality of the self, the reality of other social subjects and the stable social and material conditions of the self's existence.

The key questions arising from the theoretical background may be listed as follows:

1. How do the media construct apocalypse?
 - 1a) Which *discourses* are employed?
 - 1b) Can Halley's comet and Mayan calendar serve as *objects of projection* of collective unconscious fears of political/economical/ecological disaster?
2. What is the role of media in the dynamics of collapse and regeneration?
 - 2a) Can apocalyptic predictions in media work as *rites of passage* – can they symbolically revitalize civilization?
 - 2b) Which discourse practices employed within media representation of apocalyptic predictions may strengthen *ontological security*?
3. What causes of the predicted apocalypse do the media construct in the discourse about the end of the world?
 - 3a) Are some of the causes of the apocalypse *historically invariable*?

Method

The attempt to answer the research questions and to assess adequacy of the theoretical reflections requires investigating and understanding media representations of the predictions of the end of the world. Therefore, as a research method I opted for discourse analysis, more precisely, an in-depth analysis of the media-discursive construction of apocalypse, further deepened by selected analytically-psychological concepts.

The broad theoretical-methodological approach of discourse analysis does not need to be described in detail here; however, it is useful to mention it is focused on the dialectical relation between a text and its social-political context, so that it ranges

between microanalysis of a concrete text and macroanalysis of social and political contexts, in which the text appears (Zábrowská 2009: 75).

Thus, the method is in full compliance with the research aim to understand the connection of media texts and archetypes to their contexts.

Among many types and models of discourse analysis I chose the model of James Paul Gee (Gee 1999), based on the constructivist assumption that whenever we speak or write, we and our communication partners reconstruct reality by simultaneously constructing *seven building tasks*, seven aspects of the situational reality: *significance, activities, identities, relationships, politics of social goods, connections and sign systems and knowledge*. All these parts of any piece of language – of any linguistic situation – are mutually interconnected, altogether creating a meaningful system, in which any aspect gives meaning to the remaining six of them (Gee 1999). As mentioned above, while analyzing these categories, I was trying to explain the media-constructive principles using selected analytically-psychological concepts: archetypes, made conscious by the process of projection (Jung 1993).

Selection of the media texts for further investigation was rather complex. First, I searched for those types of media existing both in 1910 and 2012 that included the end of the world into their agenda. Besides daily newspapers (the most read serious press in both cases) several esoteric magazines and scientific magazines were identified as suitable for data retrieval. Moreover, during the exploration process a new potentially significant type of media emerged in each of the years: humorous magazines in 1910 and websites dedicated to the end of the world in 2012. Subsequently, sixty newspaper and magazine articles in total were selected⁵ and divided into six groups based on (1) the year and (2) the type of the general Discourse of the text – a set of rules for speaking about a topic in question (Gee 1999). (Three Discourses were defined: the Discourse of common sense, the esoteric Discourse and the scientific Discourse.) The format of this paper does not allow me to present the newspaper/magazine articles and the process of the analysis; however, I shall enrich the next section with several illustrative examples.

Research findings and discussion

The most obvious finding to emerge from the discourse analysis of the media texts of 1910 is that the media employ diverse discursive mechanisms to construct various levels of apocalyptic *spectacle* (see Debord 2007; Kellner 2007):

Common desire to become witnesses to the spectacle that only once in the life of mortal beings presents itself caused that last night was not only holiday of astronomers, but also an event for the general public. (Národní listy 1910/5/19)

The spectacle embraces also liminality of *rites of passage* (see Turner 1969), bacchantic frolicsomeness and carnival humour (Bachtin 2007).

Furthermore, the results suggest that in 1910 the media texts notifying of the end of the world have the capability to clearly articulate the causes of predicted apocalypse, related to the social changes ongoing in the modernized societies:

You accursed human creature, alas, alas, alas! You did not live as a Catholic and it shall be badly paid you back. (...) You haughty people, do not you have enough trains, cars, tramways, now you want to fly up, in the aeroplane to Eden? (Kopřivy 1910/5/12)

The media of 1910 criticize – in a humorous language code – the characteristic features of the modernization process: secularization, emancipation, industrialization including introducing modern industrial technologies into war, alphabetization etc. (Havelka – Müller 1996; Giddens 1991). They pillory the church for changeable morals, simultaneously pronouncing the realization that science is no substitute for the church when it comes to distribution of certainty and security. Some of the texts go even further, celebrating the failure of scientific messianic desires, regretting neither the loss of big narratives nor unpredictability of future:

⁵ Only articles thematizing the given apocalyptic prediction based on the return of Halley's comet or on the end of Mayan calendar were included in the research sample.

And perhaps it is good [that the science is unable to provide certainty]. (...) So it is almost certain we shall escape without any disaster on the terrifying day. Because everything is, thank God, uncertain. And where the uncertainty is, hope rules. And where the hope reigns, life blooms. Long may live the uncertainty! (Národní listy 1910/2/20)

Both the cognition that science did not succeed in substituting the church in the process of distribution of ontological security and the absence of disillusion with this loss of certainty is in fact fully postmodern (Lyotard 1993; Best – Kellner 1997; Giddens 1991).

The mode of ritualizing the end of the world by the media texts of 1910 is comparable in complexity to that employed by the media texts of 2012. The daily press of 2012 I investigated was distinctly calling for revitalization, even attempting – just as traditional ritualized or enacted myths do – to symbolically dissolve the linearity of time:

No downfall. According to the Mayas, a new era begins. (MF Dnes 2012/1/19)

Even without the end a new beginning may come. (MF Dnes 2012/12/22)

Another way of revitalization appeared to be discursive implementation of the archetype of Death and Rebirth; or, to put it simply, stating that the end of the world has already taken place. In *Mladá fronta DNES*, the daily newspaper representing daily press of 2012, this symbolically accomplished apocalypse had two different forms:

After all, the rule of communism and the end of the world is the same thing. (MF Dnes 2012/12/21)

...the end of the world is not supposed to come before tomorrow, but Bugarach, a small village in south France has already been experiencing it for some time (MF Dnes 2012/12/20).

In the first case, the threat of “the rule of communism” represents Czech local notion of apocalypse (elsewhere, I have called its collectively unconscious dimension “communist complex”; Kotišová 2014); the second example shows that the mass panic is considered to be worldwide form of apocalypse. If the apocalypse is constructed as identical with the mass panic, scientists are expected to fend it off. Representatives of scientific knowledge, especially astronomers, intertextually present in the media texts, fulfil the archetype of Hero (more precisely its modification, Wise old man⁶) fighting against the panicking Shadow⁷/Dragon, seizing control over the apocalyptic discourse. Thus, in contrast to the media of 1910, the media of 2012 reproduce the modern myth of scientific omnipotence, the capability of science to deliver salvation.

What could this discrepancy be attributed to? Is the distinction between modernity and late modernity too subtle to permeate media representations, or, on the contrary,

⁶ The archetype of Hero is typically used in combination with Dragon, together representing the classical duality of good and evil, whereas Wise old man is a modification of the general Hero, emphasizing rationality and wisdom (Jacobi 1943, Jung – Sharp 2005).

⁷ The archetype of Shadow is the dark side of Psyche, representing all its aspects that are hidden, suppressed, irrational and dangerous (Jacobi 1943).

too coercive to meet the discontinuities and inconsistencies of the processes and developments within human society? Is it defensible to mark some of the discursive strategies of the media of 1910 as postmodern? Both theoretical elaboration and more research on this topic needs to be undertaken before the questions are more clearly understood.

Having discussed one of the unexpected findings, the final section of this paper addresses the research questions. As I have indicated before, the analysis suggested that the representations of apocalypse in 1910 – more than a hundred years ago – and in 2012 share many motives.

First, in both cases the media emphasize symbolical revitalization. Thus, the revitalizing discourse may be considered to be historically invariable discursive mechanism employed by the media in the process of representing an apocalyptic prediction. Symbolical revitalization is often supported by theatrical discourse, circulating in the pieces of text that are turning the predicted catastrophe into spectacle, a play, a ritual.

But why the media stress just revitalization and ritual? It seems that an apocalyptic vision in media and its object – in this case, the Halley's comet or the Mayan calendar – may work as a vehicle of a message about social, political or ecological problems that could be serious or even fatal in near future, because they are being articulated at the occasion of an apocalyptic prediction. In other words, I suggest that as the media connect the apocalyptic predictions with its parallel social context (with the context's dismal aspects), the predictions and their objects become objects of projection of collective unconscious fears, activated by hints of real crisis. The local Czech case of manifestation of the communist complex mentioned above may be used as an example of this mechanism: a part of the collective unconscious of Czech post-socialist population might contain the fear of recurrence of the communist past and may consider it – based on existing indicators⁸ – to be a realistic scenario. Thus, the fear is projected to media representations of apocalyptic predictions, activated – probably by many different factors – during the moments of endangered ontological security and escalated apocalyptic fear (Weber 1999; Rollo 1993).

Second, the ability of the media to project collective unconscious, and also the conspicuousness of the revitalizing discourse suggest that a media representation of an apocalyptic prediction may work as a *rite of passage* that revitalizes civilization. However, the form of ritualization and therefore revitalization differs. In 1910 the media seem to explicitly search the collective conscience, they are openly joking about the collective guilt, turning the prediction into spectacle. In 2012 the symbolic revitalization is more deeply embedded in discourses: journalists call for new beginning, new chance for human civilization, they are trying to dissolve the linearity of time.

In addition, these findings further support the idea that the cyclic character of apocalyptic predictions and their cancellations that are endlessly repeating can, in the upshot, strengthen ontological security of the media consumers, because, first, the

⁸ A series of recent surveys shows that the communist party (KSČM) is increasingly popular in the Czech Republic: for results of a poll from October/November 2012, see *Stem.cz* (2012/11/14, the red sector).

constant rotation of safety and threat promotes a cyclic view on development of affairs and second, the media as such are a reliable, omnipresent and continual phenomenon (Volek 1998; Kohoutek – Čermák 2009). However, more research on audience's perception of apocalyptic visions in media needs to be undertaken before the association between the predictions and their consequences for ontological security is more clearly understood.

Third, the general cause of the end of the world articulated by the media I studied is the same in both cases: human guilt, transgression of diverse principles varying from traditional Christian tenets to rules of ecologic behaviour. In addition, in both cases the human guilt is often specified as the self-destructive tendency of human kind, aggression and inclination to war conflicts. Thus, redress of the collective guilt – abandoning the aggressive tendencies – is implicitly constructed by the media as a method of postponement of the actual, real crisis or even collapse. Furthermore, the ritualization of apocalyptic prediction and symbolic revitalization as constructed within the discourse about the end of the world (see above) assist in symbolical postponement of the apocalypse.

However, as the perpetual return forms the core of the predicted, symbolical apocalypse's cautionary function, the media are unable to cancel it, and certainly unable to cancel the "end of the world" in the form of social, political, economical crisis. If the claim of some historians that the frequency of apocalyptic predictions increases during crises is right, the human civilization is in crisis; its outcome is unpredictable, though. Although the analysis has suggested that the media are capable of projecting collective unconscious fears of certain actualities that could probably become epicentres of conflicts and crises (ecological problems, new war technologies, totalitarian regimes), as Jung says, one never knows, if she sees trees, or the wood (BBC 1959/10/22). Therefore it is very difficult to say where the real problems, activating collective unconscious fear, lead. Most probably, they will result in another prediction of the end of the world. The very next apocalypse, according to Mayan calendar update, comes in September 2015.

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Modern Communication: Judgement of the Past

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Abstract

In this current digital era, Malaysian ideology of modern communication revolves highly around the active participation in online social activities by using computerised digital devices such as smartphones or tablets. Back then, the initial idea of having digital assistant in communicating between human is to solve certain complication or difficulties involving the issue of speed, location and mobility. Never to deny these ideas, the use of modern methods in communicating did manage to send information in a blink of an eye, connecting people from many different places and assisting in maintaining those connections even while travelling. In retrospect to the period of 10 to 20 years back in Malaysia, the usage of digital media communication then is a subject to differ in comparison with the current practice in the country. Long ago, communication technology does not entail as many benefits as to what the current digital media could offer. However, despite of all the obvious advantages, there are several concerns towards the contribution of these modern practices on human vulnerability. With reference to the statements made several decades ago by communication or technology expert; Alan Turing, Walter Benjamin and Ralph Hartley, the speculation on the drawbacks of digital media and communication technology has begun even before the existence of World Wide Web (WWW). Therefore this paper contains the discussion on evaluation and interpretation study based on the past judgement; and how the interrelation works in parallel with the current use of communication technology specifically in Malaysia.

Keywords: Modern Communication, Communication Technology Practice, Previous Technology Speculation, Communication in Malaysia

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Introduction

Due to the rapid growth of information and communication technology, the usage of intelligent mobile devices has been adopted into large part of population in the urban cities of Malaysia. Generally in most urban nations of the world, modern communication technology has become inseparable with interpersonal everyday communication as it merged a collective form of personal communities, network sociality and mobile sociality (Petric, Petrovcic and Vehosar, 2011). As the population increases, possible communication channels and media will expand and grow in its complexity.

Modern communication also contributes to modern transformation that happens in many different ways as it took place in various parts of the world. This would result in the globalization form of language where many social communication turns into 'mediated truth' about 'us' and 'others' (Kamali, 2012). In the urban cities of Malaysia, social media plays powerful controlling tools over people's mind-set in which it is a product of a modern culture. One could speculate that communication technology is actually secondary; and the real drives for further development and massive scale of implementation comes from the constant need of technology among people (Kittler, 2014). Hence, it is people's desire that changes their mindset in requiring the extra need of access to technology.

The common use of modern communication in Malaysia currently includes popular mobile applications such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and many other applications that allow online communication to take place. Especially due to high purchase of intelligent digital gadgets, these social communication platforms are accessible at almost anywhere in the country. However, previous research has shown that excessive usage of modern communication and constant connection with technology contributes to an imbalance lifestyle among active users (Wright, Abendschein, Wambacher, O'Connor, Hoffman, Dempsey, Krull, Dewers and Shelton, 2014). This reflects the situation in Malaysia where the dependency on communication technology does not necessarily reduce users' workload in fact, it increases the capacity due to the improvement of speed hence the higher expectations of productivity as well.

The excessive usage of digital devices has altered the shape of nation's culture and it developed ways of using online social media vocabulary language as an option for primary communication. These computerised social elements are now expected to have 'feelings' however, the growth of online leisure opportunities will actually contribute to computer mitigated feelings of loneliness (Hynan, Murray and Goldbart, 2014). All of these shortcomings have originally been predicted many decades ago even before the existence of modern applications and technology software. There is a statement made in 1836 that says; technology does not only shape by the materials, but at a fundamental level, it was formed by the usage of it as it is reflected by the national cultures (Chevalier, 1836). Basically it suggests that new communication tools could perhaps contribute to ultimate changes in the human condition.

With reference to the past predictions and judgement of communication technology, the author would study and interpret previous predictions involving information

value, users' behaviours and artificial intelligent aspect and how these predictions interrelate to the current communication practice in Malaysia.

Method and scope

The objective of this paper is to conduct an exploratory research as it is used to provide a better understanding of the relation between past speculations with current modern communication practices in Malaysia. The method chosen will be to review previous related literature and analyse the connection by using constant comparative technique. This method is used as the process would be to compare the newly collected data with the previous data. List of literatures varied from publications that were released decades ago and also publications released recently. The explicit study of the content will be based on the suitability of topics and findings related to the objective.

The scope of this study covers three kinds of issues related to the past judgements or concerns towards communication technology which would be; communication messages and its value, participation behaviours and artificial intelligent. All of these previous predictions were made by well-known communication and technology experts; Ralph Hartley, Walter Benjamin and Alan Turing. To understand the relationship between these past speculations with modern communication practices in Malaysia, the author has selected three most suitable area of popular practice which includes; online news distribution, online photo sharing and intelligent personal assistant. The main process is to study and understand the previous decade's existence of idea towards the speculations on modern communication and how it correlates to the current communication practice today.

Past Judgement: Communication messages and its value

Communication is a process of conveying messages that hold meanings and in this current era, modern communication is an act of communicating that involves the usage of intelligent digital tools and programming. Back in the last millennia, Ralph Hartley in the year 1928 had written that the usage of technology in conveying messages might include many other symbols; could appear in words, dots or dashes; before it turns into a readable messages. However, technology has the capability to encourage users to constantly altering conversation subject or changing participants' involvement and this will affect the practice of restraining the 'physical' form of the meaning and values of the messages (Hartley, 1928). As an example, modern communication system during that era; a telephone is able to transmit speech successfully and Hartley's prediction would be that it will remain successful as long as the system remained unchanged.

However, technology system will forever be modified which resulted to a judgement of each messages transferred through a system, the corresponding messages have smaller sums of message value from the initial meaning and this proves that technology system is inoperative in restraining information value (Hartley, 1928). In relation to the current practice in Malaysia, there is a similarity of this prediction with the issue of Malaysia online news portals. Without adapting to readers' point-of-view, news authors typically deliver news from one specific angle or perspective and the damage usually happens when there are readers equipped with knowledge and skills

to alter those messages; intentionally or unintentionally; change the discourse to suit their understanding (Abdullah and Koh, 2008). It is a challenge for readers to select the 'correct' meaning from too many 'official' news websites and should they believe the 'wrong meaning', it could possibly create chaos towards the citizens' reaction on certain issues especially those involving sensitive matters such as Malaysian politics and current affairs.

The author noticed similar issues with the recent incident of Malaysian Airline flight MH370 and MH17. As globally known, this issue involves a missing plane in February and another plane being shot down just few months after in July. From observation, there are too many speculations and opinion being spread online and most of it divert more towards the negative aspect of the situation especially on how Malaysian authorities handle the case. All of these outsiders' speculations do not necessarily help with the situation; in fact it creates more confusion to a point where it affects how citizens from other country view Malaysia as a whole. This unhealthy example of digital media reflects the prediction of decades ago on how having constant exposure to different individuals with constant change of subject will create chaos and lessen the message value.

Past Judgement: Participation Behaviours

It is in human nature to follow what is known to be current and in-trend with excessive numbers of participants of any particular activity. Malaysia is currently experiencing the age of social media in which the changes in contemporary or modern perception is very much related to society's mode of existence and social causes. With reference to a statement made by Walter Benjamin in 1936, mass reproduction is supported particularly by the reproduction of masses; which means the duplication of action. Social activity often changes according to time and to take an event of photography as an example, it often promotes a change in receptivity (Benjamin, 1936). In relation to this, social activity processes are very much connected with the enhancement and development of reproduction and photography technique.

By having to capture big parades, sports events, monster rallies and many other activities on lens, these images were brought face-to-face with other viewers and though it is accessible to human eyes, the missing elements would be the authentic human experiences and privatisation of memories (Benjamin, 1936). Therefore Benjamin also mentioned that this establishes an understanding of which human behaviour tend to favour mechanical equipment and social acceptance rather than exclusivity of genuine feelings. It is interesting that this speculation arises before the existence of smart phone with camera function or social photography sites.

In the current digital communication age, an online website 'wearesocial.net' present a reading in 2014 that Malaysia is extremely mobile friendly where it ranked highest in the daily internet usage in South-East Asia and 98% of internet users in Malaysia are on social media. In social media events, photo sharing activities has been a popular trend that turns into a modern culture in Malaysia. These activities include sharing personal expression and experiences on individual online social network account which are accessible by other users (Mustafa and Hamzah, 2011). These shared photos might at times be a ridiculous habit by sharing pictures of common daily routines such as driving to work, watching TV, eating or even sleeping. A recent

trend in casual photography called 'selfie' is now one of the most popular apparatus of self-snap mobile tools (Jenks, 2013). The idea of this particular self-portrait is to share a quick current photo updates online and receiving feedback from others either by commenting or voting 'like' as a sign of approval towards the photos. It could at time turns into a self-promotion in the least delicate manner (Hu, Manikonda and Kambhampati, 2014). Such participation behaviours are very common in Malaysia and for most cases; the motivation to this behaviour lies on the fact of the influential excessive growing numbers of users. Hence, this reflects to what was predicted by Walter Benjamin; social behaviours are shaped by duplication of actions of mass reproduction.

Past Judgement: Artificial Intelligent

The ideology of technology in current digital media has drawn a line between man's capability towards their physical and intellectual strength. This happens due to the anticipation towards digital gadgets in carrying out operations similar to a human routine. As results, digital computers are then playing around the idea of artificial intelligent which is constructed accordingly; by having several human principles embedded into the program to mimic actions of a human (Turing, 1950). In this current digital era, it seems that there are no limitations to what a computer can do. As long as human allow computer to 'think' like human, a machine could then adapt to the ability to 'observe' or 'predict' the future of human behaviours and privacy details within a reasonable time.

Even before artificial intelligent starts its practice; there was already an earlier speculation in the year 1950 by Alan Turing towards digital computer's imitation on human action. The perspective of this particular judgement is that a machine will eventually compete with human in terms of physical and intellectual capacities to the point where it will be difficult to select which is more capable (Turing, 1950). Together with this statement, Turing also mentioned that teaching a machine is like teaching children as it can be monitored in order to see how well it learns. But the danger with machine is that it tends to adapt to the command given by human and predict the future activities; thus it has the capability to give orders to human based on previous task.

In Malaysia, there is a newly introduced current practice called 'Voice-Activated Intelligent Assistant' that can be stored straight into the mobile phone. The usage of this would be to command the machine in operating mobile-related communication activities such as; posting updates, replying emails, writing text-messages, web searching or any other similar operations (Miller, 2012). This application is building up its popularity in Malaysia especially among advanced-smartphone users. It seems the advantages of this would be to provide communication assistance in any typing task or researching answers as mobile phones could automatically do the 'thinking' and 'typing' so it can provide users straight with the outcome (Miller, 2012). This reflects to what was speculated by Turing earlier on having computer machine being 'taught' to conduct human routines and activities. Based on previous study, results shows that 'Voice-Activated Intelligent Assistant' called '*Siri App*' on *i-Phone* mobile product have a better task completion time in comparison with manual-typing (Yager, 2013). Henceforth, this reflects to a concern raised by Turing about having difficulties

to compare the capacity of intellectual and physical capability between machine and human.

Conclusion

In this paper, the author explores the comparison study between previous judgements on modern technology against communication practices in the urban cities of Malaysia. The scope of discussion covers three predictions in the area of message values, participation behaviours and artificial intelligence. As readings have shown, complications of using digital gadgets as a tool to communicate bring several drawbacks in terms of the original value of distribution messages, encouragement of imbalance lifestyle and competition between human and machine towards intellectual and physical capabilities. Even in a small country like Malaysia, the current communication practices do relate to all of these shortcomings.

Having the messages shared online is doubtful to the validity of its content, as advance as the current technology, it is difficult to prevent from this issue to occur. This is due to human being captivated and immersed into such digital activities where the influences comes among human itself in wanting to be part of excessive participation activities in order to be part of a current trend. Without realising it, it seems that it is not human that controls technology, it is technology and media that controls human's activity.

From all of the readings and analysis, the author manages to relate several issues based on previous observation and experience. In a recent family gathering, the author notice something strange on how four kids aged from 2 to 4 years old play with each other. As the adults having conversation at one corner, kids were laughing, talking, singing and making silly voices as normal kids would. However as the author glimpse to have a look, it is surprising that those four kids are not actually laughing with each other as each of the cheerful attention is being given to the digital tablet called I-pad. Even while sitting around each other, instead of playing with kids around the same age, these digital savvy kids who most likely are not able to tie their own shoe laces or even converse properly when they are hungry, are much attached to the technology activities that is being exposed at a very young age. The author wonders then, in 20 years to come, how these kids would converse with each other and how the society are going to behave and will this exposure affect their communication and personal skills.

It amazes the author in knowing that the existence of judgement and prediction on how modern communication would react to society begin many years ago even before the people then could enjoy the benefits of what communication technology provide today. Nevertheless, most of the past speculations were made by communication and technology experts whom origins are from far developed countries than Malaysia. However as previous readings have shown, the relations of these past judgements arguably do correlate to the current communication practices even in developing country such as Malaysia. Though the idea perhaps is only applicable to the communication practices in the urban cities of Malaysia hence, it is debatable for the author to conclude that communication and digital gadgets are tools created to serve users despite of the geographical, cultural or any other differences. For as long as human, or specifically any human allow the machine to 'think', 'act' or 'work' like a

human, digital media technology will keep on latching on people's life until it literally might be difficult for human to communicate or even function without it.



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People Power PR: Recasting Activists as Practitioners

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Abstract

This paper examines the use of public relations tactics by activists and protesters during the 2013 Gezi Park uprising in Turkey. During the Gezi Park occupation in Istanbul, the crackdown by Turkish police and the subsequent nationwide protests across Turkey, activists used public relations techniques to confront and critique the dominant power structure of the Turkish government under Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The author traveled to Istanbul in August 2013 and conducted interviews with mainstream and alternative journalists covering the unrest, as well as protesters and academics involved in the Gezi Park occupation and the nationwide demonstrations. Combining firsthand interviews, observation and research, the author concludes that activists have employed key components of successful public relations campaigns – controlled media, uncontrolled media and events – to advance their cause and forge networks of communication that circumvent government control and undermine the authority of Prime Minister Erdoğan. This conclusion works from the premise of Holladay and Coombs that the history of public relations has been distorted by an emphasis on corporate methods and outcomes. Only when theorists recast activism from the fringes of public relations to its center can they begin to examine how communication strategies function when they are not focused on consumption and production. This paper is an attempt to take a step in that direction, using the 2013 Turkish uprising as an example of how technology and social media have created a means for activists to circumvent mainstream media and create and maintain a national movement.

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INTRODUCTION

It is only in the last 20 years that public relations researchers and theorists have begun to consider the role of activists as something other than obstacles to successful public relations campaigns. Writing on her study of grassroots activism in Victoria, Australia, Kristin Demetrious, Ph.D., and author of “Public Relations, Activism, and Social Change: Speaking Up,” states that activist campaigns “show that new communication practices and approaches are emerging, seemingly undescribed in public relations literature.” [1] Timothy Coombs and S.J. Holladay likewise point out in their co-authored book, “It’s Not Just PR: Public Relations in Society,” that, while public relations was recognized as a component of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, it was not until the 1990s that researchers recognized that activists were utilizing public relations tactics and not just threatening social and economic stability. [2]

BACKGROUND

The occupation of Gezi Park in the summer of 2013 began when a small group of environmental activists tried to preserve the park from plans, backed by the government, to turn the public space into a shopping mall and a replica of Ottoman barracks that occupied the site in the early 20th century. Activists initially used the Twitter hashtag #ayagakalk (stand up). [3] An initial festival in April 2013 attracted several thousand activists and resulted in no clashes between protesters and police. But the following month, a similar occupation of the park became a sensation after two images showing aggressive police response were posted to social media and YouTube and went viral. The first was an image of an unarmed woman in a red dress being tear-gassed by police. The second was a video of police burning tents and clearing Gezi Park during the night.

For Ayşe Gül Altınay, activist and professor of anthropology and gender studies at Sabancı University, Istanbul, confronting the size and the diversity of the crowds gathered at Taksim Square was, at first, somewhat astonishing. “Initially, on May 31, when I was out on the street, trying to come to the park in an act of solidarity against the police attacks against the people who were here trying to protect the trees. It was totally shocking to see all kinds of people,” Altınay said. “That was the first question we all asked, ‘How did people know about this. How did we all come together?’ And it was the Twitter, really. Even people who had not been using Twitter very regularly before that, on that day, they became Twitter addicts.” [4]

The hashtag #direnceziparki (resist Gezi Park) was adopted, and Turkish celebrities, musicians and activists began to call on their supporters and followers to come to Gezi Park and join the demonstration. The image of the Twitter logo, a blue bird, was altered, maintaining the original design components, but augmented with a gas mask. This became a prominent symbol for the resistance, often accompanying both #direnceziparki as well as #occupygezi hashtags stenciled as graffiti, silkscreened on T-shirts, and used as a graphic in social media posts. This image was infused with meaning when Erdoğan, realizing the significance of Twitter as a primary channel of communication for the protesters, referred to it as a “menace” and social media at large, “the worst menace to society.” [5]

Police responded to the growing protest with massive force, sometimes shooting tear gas canisters directly at individuals, which resulted in major injuries and several deaths. On June 2, 2013, a date when CNN International showed images of police using brute force to disperse demonstrators in Gezi Park and hundreds of thousands of people in more than 40 Turkish cities continued to protest, CNN-Turk showed a documentary of penguins. This action became a symbol for many activists of the level of incompetence and general disconnect between the people and the mainstream media. Activists adopted the image of the penguin as a symbol of defiance, satirically recasting the penguin in a number of comic social media posts, pointing to the close ties between media owners and the Erdoğan government. Prime Minister Erdoğan labeled protesters as "çapulcular" (looters), a phrase that was co-opted by protesters, who created the term "çapulling" (looting) to describe their resistance, adopting a rhetoric of mimicry to undermine a label meant to dismiss their self-willed defiance as acts of deviance.

During the initial stages of the protest, widely different constituencies occupied the park and displayed banners denoting their party or affiliation. Realizing this display had the potential to cause strife between protesters, while providing ammunition to pro-government media who were trying to label the movement, protesters agreed to remove all banners. The one exception to this rule was the rainbow flag symbolizing gay, lesbian and bisexual equality. As the only exception to the restriction, the rainbow flag became a unique symbol for the resistance not only within Gezi Park but across Turkey, where rainbows were painted into public steps and on the sides of buildings as a symbol of solidarity with the protesters.

Protester Erdem Gündüz created another potent symbol of resistance when he stood and stared at the Turkish flags on the Atatürk Cultural Center in Istanbul for eight straight hours, beginning late Monday, June 17 until early Tuesday, June 18, 2013. Other protesters took up this "standing man" protest in Gezi Park and elsewhere across Turkey. Protesters also used Twitter and Facebook to boycott businesses that had failed to open their doors to protesters during the police crackdown, as well as boycotting media outlets that had largely ignored the attacks.

Outside of Turkey, in New York, a group of Turkish Americans who supported the protesters launched an online crowd-funding campaign, running from June 2-9, 2013, successfully raising over \$108,000 to buy a full-page advertisement in the New York Times (published June 7, 2013), engaging their funders in helping to create the ad and voting upon what to do with surplus funds. The resulting advertisement advocated for an end to the police crackdown, the establishment of unbiased media coverage, an investigation in "the government's abuse of power and loss of innocent lives."

After the Gezi Park occupation was dispersed in June 2013 by a massive police response, activists continued to keep local residents up to date and engaged by holding regular public forums in parks and other public gathering spots across Istanbul and in other Turkish cities. The forums act as an open debate about the state of affairs in Turkey and featured speakers from different religions and backgrounds who share their perspective and concerns. The forum location and times are communicated and promoted via social media, including the establishment of dedicated Facebook pages. The Twitter hashtag "#direngezi" became a global

trending topic, solidifying international support for the Turkish protesters and activists.

As with the Occupy Movement, the Turkish resistance has maintained an appearance of transparency and inclusiveness that has contributed greatly to its popularity, despite mainstream media and government attempts to label protesters as extremists influenced by foreign elements. Although the occupation began primarily with the support and involvement of university students and environmental activists, it has spread to include people of all ages from different religious backgrounds, and members of traditionally oppositional political parties, and an assortment of supporters from varied socio-economic backgrounds. Testifying before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs July 31, 2013, Boston University Social Anthropology Professor Jenny White said the protests' effect of bridging the gaps between different opposition groups in Turkey was its most important outcome. "It is the first time in Turkish history that such masses of people have come together without any ideological or party organization." [6]

Each death resulting from police attacks has been publicized using social media and public forums to create a martyrdom effect that continues to reinforce the message of the protesters and bolster their cause among a diverse demographic. At a public forum in Göztepe Park on Sept. 12, 2013 in Istanbul, I witnessed a gathering of more than 130 people of all ages, from families with children to the elderly. Park benches were rearranged in rows facing a makeshift stage area, which featured a banner, "Bağdat Caddesi Forumu," and two Turkish flags, one depicting Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Photos of dead protesters were displayed on the grass and illuminated by candles. Many of those arriving to take part in the night's debate started by walking past the memorial and "paying their respects." The evening's discussion was hosted by an M.C., who explained he'd been elected by the people in attendance during a previous forum. Several people stood and spoke, most standing near where they were seated.

Like the protests, the forums were live events, a form of public relations where people gather and exchange ideas. In addition, the forums featured several pieces of controlled media – printed materials, such as signage, to identify the function of the event, as well as to communicate essential information and intentionally politically persuasive messages. Sometimes forums were attended by members of the media, either as invited speakers or as observers / reporters. But different from the protests and other demonstrations, the forums' emphasis were on what J. E. Grunig defined as two-way symmetrical forms of communications in which the exchange of opinion and commentary could be contentious and controversial, but which relies on open and mutual two-way communication, focusing on mutual respect and understanding, rather than one-way persuasion messaging.

The M.C. at the Bağdat Caddesi forum, Ahmet Guvenc (a pseudonym), described the function of the forums and protocols employed, clearly in line with Grunig's characterization of the symmetrical model of PR. "First of all to create a discussion culture in a positive way, that's my priority actually," Guvenc said. "Because in our community in Turkey, sometimes we don't know how to discuss, then we don't respect others' ideas. ...Actually, myself, I try to change this culture, listen to other's idea. Not necessarily accepting the other's idea, but tolerating and respecting ideas." [7]

At one outdoor concert and demonstration in the Kadikoy neighborhood of Istanbul, which I witnessed Sept. 15, 2013, the crowd carried life-sized photos on sticks depicting the faces of six protesters killed by police. On a building across the street, a former hotel under reconstruction, a large banner depicted all six protesters. Police, arriving by the busload, surrounded the area. The tension was palpable.

In March 2014, new protests erupted in 31 Turkish cities after a teenager injured in the protests of the previous summer died. The boy's story was widely circulated on social media and the framing of his circumstance added to the growing sense of injustice. Fifteen-year-old Berkin Elvan, it was reported in *The New York Times*, was struck in the head by a tear-gas canister while fetching bread for his family. [8]

RESULTS

The outcome of the public relations efforts tied to the Gezi Park protest has been multi-faceted and has international implications. Olympic organizers listed the protests as one reason Istanbul was not awarded the 2020 Summer Olympics. The widely publicized police crackdowns in 2013 and 2014 have been condemned by Western nations and human rights organizations. European Union foreign ministers postponed EU membership talks with Turkish officials and raised doubts about whether Turkey will be admitted as a new EU member.

Within Turkey, Prime Minister Erdoğan's plan to enact a new constitution based on a presidential system has taken a serious blow and many believe his administration is at a crisis point, especially after corruption charges in December 2013 against high-level officials and businessmen with close connections to the government. Turkey's tourism industry suffered significant declines in revenue and several countries, including the U.S., issued warnings for tourists considering travels to Turkey. On the fourth day of nationwide protests, June 3, 2013, Istanbul's stock exchange suffered its largest one-day loss in a decade, down 10.5 percent. [9]

ARGUMENT

The study of public relations efforts of Turkish protesters illustrates how activism can play a central role in a campaign that is structured not through the corporate frame of consumption and production, but through a moral framework whose purpose is to expose injustice and to expand human rights, not to maintain organizational sustainability and status quo or increase company profits. On this subject, Christopher Spicer, author of "Public Relations in a Democratic Society: Value and Values" writes that, "Public relations should ensure equal access to the process and equal participation in setting ground rules that ensure goodwill as witnessed in speaking and listening civilly. In essence, public relations should serve as the referee for the often contentious problem-solving conversations necessary for a democratic society to thrive." [10]

Whereas sociopolitical movements, such as the Gezi Park uprising, do not traditionally benefit from the work of a team of PR practitioners hired to manage communication efforts and the reputation of the organization, activists involved in a movement – to the extent they choose to participate – often serve as a make-shift brigade of DIY PR agents. Yet, due to a pervasive societal assumption that PR

professionals are disingenuous communicators who stand to profit from manipulating their publics, activists often reject the notion that their communications efforts fall under the rubric of public relations work. This has been especially true for Occupy Movements whose participants reject both corporate ethos and top-down governmental dictates in favor of a horizontal democratic structure where decisions are made collaboratively and individuals involved are reticent to speak for the group at large.

Todd Gitlin, writing in 2012 about the Occupy Wall Street movement, commented upon the organizational structure and communication efforts of activists: “The encampments were consistently unwilling to make the effort to coalesce around what would conventionally be called demands and programs,” Gitlin said. “Instead, what they seemed to relish most was themselves: their community and esprit, their direct democracy, the joy of becoming transformed into a movement, a presence, a phenomenon that was known to strangers, and discovering with delight just how much energy they had liberated.” [11]

During the initial days, the occupation of Gezi Park took on much of the same characteristics as the Occupy movement in the U.S., as activists formed an inclusive community. As Altınay recalled, “Living in Gezi, it was really kind of a Utopian state where everything was free. The food was free. People did all the tasks together, from cleaning to preparing food. There were libraries. There was free education for children and young people. And art programs for children. It was this wonderful site where people shared everything, and in this sharing that people came together with other people that they had feared the most or hated the most until that moment. It really changed everyone’s attitude towards each other. And helped produce an incredibly transformative public space that was inclusive of all kinds of identifications and experiences and so on without any judgment.” [12]

It is in this context of an open, equitable social structure that communication efforts are not experienced as exclusive to predetermined members of an organizational hierarchy. Communication and the flow of information becomes something in which everyone can participate. Demetrious argues that, “Only when we are ‘disarticulated from productive forces’ can we achieve a new version of communication.” [13] Likewise, Derina Holtzhausen, author of “Public Relations as Activism: Postmodern Approaches to Theory and Practice,” discusses the possibilities of the practice to “bring about a more just and egalitarian society.” [14]

The communication strategies of the Turkish demonstrators incorporated key components of a successful public relations campaign. This is especially evident in their response to restrictive government decrees and police brutality toward demonstrators, events that escalated the nontraditional and traditional media attention and immediately increased the reach of movement’s message as well as its constituency. However, whereas the traditional organizational PR approach champions the practitioners’ attempts to stabilize, support, and/or reassert the established organizational hierarchy, especially within the dynamic of a PR crisis (where the organization may experience an “attack” of some kind), the activists’ role in the sociopolitical movement is to subvert and destabilize their opposition while building consensus among their publics.

To accomplish this, protesters established their own networks to promote their campaign, especially through Facebook and Twitter. The fact that these outlets have become powerful is reinforced by repeated attempts by the Erdoğan government to block social media in Turkey, as well as ongoing monitoring by police of popular Twitter hashtags and Facebook sites as a way to respond to and anticipate nightly demonstrations and protests.

Media beyond the control of protesters was co-opted for their purposes. During the massive police response to the Gezi Park occupation in June 2013, one Twitter user posted an image showing what was on television on six of Turkey's primary stations and the message: "Right now the TV channels." None of the stations was covering the protests, a fact that was utilized, promoted and shared by protesters as further evidence of the mainstream media's failure and their ties to the dominant paradigm promoted and maintained by the Erdoğan government. During the Gezi crackdown, another protester Tweeted, "Seriously, CNN-Turk is airing a show on penguins." [15]

Protesters recognized and promoted the absurdity of this contrast between what was happening on mainstream media and what was happening on the streets of Turkish cities by broadcasting the "realities on the ground" via YouTube. Supporters around the world lived the raw moments of the Turkish protests and the police response through graphic videos and images that portrayed unarmed individuals standing up to battalion lines fully armored police protected by shields and wielding batons and military vehicles, known as "Tomas," that shot high-powered water canons at unarmed protesters. These images succeeded in portraying Turkish demonstrators as the victims of oppressive force and reinforced the validity of their cause.

The lack of an identifiable hierarchy and organizational structure made the protests more difficult to dismantle by the dominant power structure. Despite attempts to imprison protest organizers and silence journalists, the government response seems incapable of having any effect on the uprising other than fanning the flames. Erdoğan's own efforts to respond on Twitter have been ridiculed and his public dismissal of the protest's legitimacy has fueled increased solidarity and commitment by a growing disgruntled Turkish populous. (In an attempt to improve the government's image, Erdoğan reportedly recruited 6,000 people to tweet on behalf of the ruling AKP party.) [16]

Coombs and Holladay point out that activists have taken the lead in terms of adopting digital technology and utilizing new media to communicate and frame their message: "Activists consistently are early adopters of websites, discussion groups, and various social media channels to disseminate information, recruit members, mobilize supporters, and solicit donations." [17]

The use of social media as a communication tool, which began with the Occupy Movement and advanced and morphed into the Arab Spring, has come to a new level with the Turkish resistance. During the height of the police crackdown in Gezi Park, at least two million Tweets with hashtags related to the protest were posted during a 24-hour period. [18] Unlike similar uprisings, a majority of those Twitter feeds came from the demonstrations, rather than from international supporters. A study by two New York University graduate students found that 90 percent of geolocated tweets came from within Turkey and half of the tweets were from within Istanbul. In

contrast, the study notes that only 30 percent of people tweeting during the Egyptian revolution were located within the country. [19]

In March 2014, Turkey blocked the use of Twitter. A week later, the government blocked YouTube. According to the International Federation for Human Rights, more than 2,600 people were detained across Turkey in the wake of the police crackdown in Gezi Park. According to the International Federation of Human Rights, forty-eight of those detainees were arrested because of the Twitter messages they sent. [20]

Events supporting the Turkish protests have been largely organized and promoted using social media. The protester's cause has been publicized using creative forms of nonviolent public expression – such as the “standing man” protest, the proliferation of anti-government graffiti (often incorporating humor) and by painting stairways in rainbow colors, all examples of controlled media PR tactics that seek to co-opt government messages, and actions, that attempt to either discredit or halt their own.

Whether intentional or the outcome of the context of the communication efforts, activist groups, particularly those that fall under the umbrella of Occupy Movements, do not place formal restrictions on branding efforts among their participants. Nor do they dictate what messages should be shared or which social media platforms should be used. Furthermore, there isn't likely to be hard and fast rules set about the nature of demonstrating, or what can and cannot be said when engaging with traditional media. Yet, to an extent, there may develop a kind of casual agreement, or even a status quo as to what may or may not be acceptable and/or appropriate in order to advance the cause, such as the Gezi Park participants' agreement to discontinue carrying flags and displaying banners that would signify their allegiance to specific political parties or causes; yet, they made an exception for the rainbow flag as a symbol of unification. Also, participants informally adopted the penguin as a symbol of the disenfranchisement, and many co-opted the term “çapulcular” to undermine the government's power to shame and dismiss the protesters.

The strategic use of words, images, and events to communicate a message in order to engage, persuade and attract an audience is the primary objective of public relations professionals in paid settings. As a society, we've come to have expectations for public relations practices. We understand the PR materials themselves as signifiers of the organization producing it, based, in part, on the quality, cost, and, to an extent, the style of the productions of those materials. Publics are inclined to reject PR efforts that are insufficient, overdone, or in some other way inconsistent with the organization producing it. For example, nonprofits could risk jeopardizing their relationship with members who have a stake in how the budget is spent if their PR efforts are seen as too extravagant given the context. Likewise, an activists' constituency, particularly in a sociopolitical context, will be put off if the “branding” becomes too consistent, if the messaging is repetitive, if the voice is too unified, and if the leadership becomes exclusive and the symmetry of the exchange within the movement begins to shift.

CONCLUSION

The Gezi Park occupation and the subsequent nationwide movement were spurred by what Dozier and Lauzen call “irreconcilable differences” between activists intent on

having their voices heard and a government intent on silencing them. Dozier and Lauzen argue that PR methods cannot “adequately accommodate social movements because such movements simultaneously involve deep psychological issues (at the microlevel) that are acted out at the societal level (at the macrolevel).” [21] But by adopting the activists’ perspective and applying PR techniques as part of a larger communication strategy, it is possible to analyze their methods without defaulting to an organizational framework, which Dozier and Lauzen rightly point out is inadequate to examine activist publics.

Profit-driven PR campaigns must be brand specific to compete in a marketplace of production and consumption. While a corporate message should be unified and concise, the activists’ form of branding should be inclusive and broad. In the case of Gezi Park protesters, the activists have managed, primarily through social media, to keep their message and the spirit of their resistance unified. As long as protesters are perceived as maintaining a moral high ground and standing peacefully in the face of police aggression, both the movement and the international community will continue to side with the resistance. With activists, the message is less controlled, but the political context has the effect of focusing the message and unifying the movement.

The influence and impact of Turkish protests nationally and internationally has been based on public relations campaign that is both strategically reactive and proactive, communicating with a targeted local, regional and national demographic as well as reaching out to an international audience to draw attention to attacks on their democratic status as citizens, build consensus and form an active coalition of resistance. Protesters have utilized controlled media, generating and “publishing” their own campaign materials; uncontrolled media, utilizing traditional outlets (those not aligned with the government or its party, the AKP) to communicate their message through journalist gatekeepers; and events – protests, forums, performances and all forms of artistic expression in a manner consistent with traditional practices. While organizational PR traditionally operates within the dominant framework as a force to stabilize, activist PR often aims to destabilize an oppressive status quo. These examples illustrate a means of viewing public relations outside the traditional corporate framework and moves toward the re-imagining of the field suggested by Coombs and Holladay. [22]

By operating through social media channels, protesters were able to mock mainstream media coverage of their cause, communicate instantly with supporters and plan nearly spontaneous gatherings and demonstrations. Despite government and police attempts to detain and jail key activists, the nonhierarchical structure of the movement has made it nearly impossible to topple by removing the perceived “leaders.” In fact, most government efforts in this regard have backfired, although a number of activists remain imprisoned.

The ability of Gezi Park protesters to promote their cause through social media and inspire international coverage of their movement has effectively broadcast and called attention to the instability of what had been one of the world’s most stable Muslim countries. The protest that began as an effort by environmentalists to protect a neglected city park in Istanbul has, in response to each dictate and overt action of their government, evolved into a grassroots PR campaign where each demonstrator and sympathizer serve as a conduit for spreading a narrative of injustice compelling

enough to break through the noise. Furthermore, the collective force of the demonstrators and movement sympathizers is powerful enough to circumvent those vehicles capable of delivering their message but politically ill-suited to do. As Author Elif Shafak pointed out in an editorial in *The Guardian* in March 2014: “While Turkey’s mainstream papers and TV channels are reluctant to give full coverage to these tragedies, the internet is awash with public anger. Via YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, Turkey’s young, urban population is increasingly voicing its discontent and frustration.” [23]



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Problems regarding the Invasion of Privacy on the Internet in Japan

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Abstract

According to Ulrich Beck, in a society steeped in risks and uncertainty, the existing political system becomes the malfunction, and technology is tinged with political characteristics. Consequently, a new type of democracy that controls risks and uncertainty through technological means becomes needed. This tendency is remarkable in the present information society. This thesis will show three necessary regulations in the present information society in Japan based on sociological studies, after dividing examples of invasion of privacy on the Web into the following three types. Type 1 is related to the problem where social networking service (SNS) platform companies overlook the invasion of privacy. Type 2 refers to the problem that legal regulations cannot keep up with freedom of speech. Type 3 includes the problem of low information literacy of the users. Recently, these problems are increasing in Japan. Personal information related with crime, for both offenders and victims, are shared on SNS, through which other users may disseminate and copy such information to other Web sites. To prevent such invasion of privacy, new human rights should be established, such as the right to be forgotten on the web, and legal regulations should be enacted to cover SNS platform companies.

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Introduction

According to Ulrich Beck, in a society steeped in risks and uncertainty, the existing political system can malfunction and technology can become tinged with political characteristics. Information technology is politically neutral in general and tends to be thought of as not involving bias, but neutral opinions do not exist regarding the personalization of search information on the web.

Cass R. Sunstein states that there is a tendency for information on the web to go to extremes: people are now sensing the risk of going beyond their familiar information environment. Yet, there is also a tendency to shut down any information that criticizes these familiar information environments. In this way, not only the real world, but also the public sphere, narrows within the web community, causing a necessity to conserve the more intimate sphere of family and friends. For example, Eli Pariser points out that information on the web is filtered according to individuals' interests, so the fact that people are not as careful enhances social risks.

Since vast amounts of information are now appearing on the web, the demand for filtered information is increasing and people are accepting personalized information by choice. By organizing information through filters such as "recommended by a friend" and "enriched preference," social networking services (SNSs) such as Facebook have become popular. It can be said that communication via SNSs promotes the "You Loop," meaning that it involves recommended information based on the analysis of historical data on the user and the personalization of his/her web environment. However, we should remember that these information environments are obtained in order to provide vast amounts of personal information free of charge; thus, there is the potential for exposure to social risks, including invasion of privacy, when using SNSs such as Facebook.

Facebook originated as Facemash.com, a ranking system of the photos of female students at Harvard University. Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, created a system that showed users two such photos—gathered through illegal access to Harvard computer servers—and asked the users to choose which female student was more beautiful. Zuckerberg then analyzed the data to create a ranking system of the appearance of Harvard's female students. Zuckerberg's blog even discussed a plan to allow users to vote by mixing photos of female students and animals. Thus, if we keep Facebook's origins in mind, it is easy to see that the company has never dealt decently with personal information. This now leaves the personal data of one billion people at risk.

One such risk occurred in mid-August of 2012. A female university student from Tokyo, who had traveled there on an internship to teach Japanese, was raped and killed by a group of men with whom she had shared a taxi in Bucharest, Romania. In Japan today, it is important for college students to participate in internships abroad, so this incident was widely reported and attracted people's attention. However, the reputational damage of this crime has not been a problem at all. After the incident, personal information that the victim had published on Twitter and Facebook was copied over and over on the web, and spread alongside writing that slandered the victim. Some detailed information, including photos of the victim, her name, the name of her university, her affiliation, and the names and photographs of her friends were

leaked from Facebook. Some of this information has still not been erased from the web, even though time has passed since the incident.

Problems such as this are increasing in Japan. Personal information related to crimes, regarding both offenders and victims, are shared on SNSs, through which other users may copy and disseminate such information to other websites. Even though Japan has delayed legislation on the protection of personal information, as have other developing countries, detailed personal information should not be allowed to be exposed such that honor is damaged. Yet, no one receives punishment for such action, creating a state of lawlessness. In order to prevent invasions of privacy like this one, not only is a legal responsibility imposed on the person who defames a victim, but Facebook, which perpetuates the risk of personal information outflow, should also be held responsible. A new type of regulation that controls risks and uncertainty and prevents invasion of privacy through technological means is needed on the web.

This thesis will introduce three suggested regulations for Japan's present information society based on prior sociological studies. It divides examples of privacy invasion on the web into three types: Type 1 relates to the problem of SNSs overlooking privacy invasion; Type 2 relates to the problem of legal regulations' inability to keep up with freedom of speech; and Type 3 relates to the problem of users' low information literacy. All three of these problems are currently increasing in importance in Japan.

Type 1: Privacy Invasion

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said in an interview with Russia Today that "Facebook in particular is the most appalling spying machine that has ever been invented." It is telling that even Assange, who has leaked sensitive information all over the world, sees Facebook's collecting of personal information as an "appalling spy machine." Yet, in recent years, Facebook has become more than a "spy machine": it has gathered not only personal data but also human data, including biological information such as face fingerprints. In China, a phenomenon called the "human flesh search" exists, in which people search for personal information, such as business addresses, names, and phone numbers, on the web. It would seem that Facebook has already become the world's largest "human flesh search" company.

According to the Associated Press, the number of Facebook users per month reached 1.28 billion in March of 2014. Even when false and overlap accounts—which are estimated at slightly less than 10% of the total—are taken into consideration, Facebook has about one billion active users—a figure close to that of the population of China and India. Moreover, Facebook is unlike other companies, such as Twitter, in that it requires users to create accounts using their real names; thus, the accuracy of the personal information found on Facebook is much higher than that of any other SNS. Facebook collects 70 types of personal information data, including credit card numbers, dates of birth, education history, facial recognition data, hometowns, last known locations, IP addresses, phone numbers, photos, political and religious views, search histories, work histories, and so on. Facebook can also analyze characteristic search words from all users' written text, thereby gathering not only the aforementioned 70 items, but also information such as sexual preference, medical history, discrimination, and evasion of the law. Thus, it is possible to analyze a variety of tendencies depending on the individual setting.

In the world of marketing, the demand for gathering such personal information is quite high. A huge company called Acxiom has already covered about 95% or more of U.S. households and retains the personal information of about 500 million people around the world. Since Facebook has already attracted many more users than Acxiom, it is not an exaggeration to say that Facebook has become the world's largest personal information company. Acxiom has the ability to earn profits by selling personal information data to private companies and government agencies. If Facebook joins this market and sells its gathered personal information, it will earn even more profits than Acxiom. It is said that the IT industry has faced many vicissitudes; therefore, companies in financial crisis will certainly be tempted to sell personal information to other companies to earn enough money to recoup losses.

Facebook has been under scrutiny by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission regarding the issue of the handling of personal information, and has been advised to discard its archive of personal data, in violation of E.U. law, by an information protection institution in Germany. In this desperate situation, Facebook has tried to regain its former glory by focusing on the enclosure of the user and the protection of further personal information. Facebook's motto was, "We're making the world more open and connected." However, the space on the web that Facebook manages is currently transforming into a "closed space" for the extraction of users' personal information. On the Facebook site, users are like livestock—given bait, enclosed within a fence, and sometimes deprived of resources. Users give up their personal data in exchange for the free use of the SNS system. Even though people join Facebook on the recommendation of their friends in order to expand their circles of friends and rekindle old friendships, personal data that appears to be visible to "friends only" could be collected and resold to third parties. It can thus be said that Facebook is quite a risky system in which to live one's private life. If they violate our privacy, should we continue to use SNS services on the web?

For these reasons, I believe that legal restrictions to anonymize personal information and to restrict the usage period of data should be required.

Type 2: Legal Regulations and Freedom of Speech

Privacy rules on the web are determined by the laws of the nations in which web servers are located, so Facebook can legally offer their services from countries that have loose privacy regulations. Of course, since SNSs are offered at no charge to the user, even though they are risky systems, there is a certain amount of freedom in their use. Yet, SNSs like Facebook have a structure in which the default settings make personal information outflow likely; thus, if users are not literate enough about those settings, it is difficult to stem the leakage of personal information. There are no problems if SNS communication is functioning smoothly, but if a communication problem occurs even once, it is possible for malicious users to expose personal information on the web. As William H. Davidow pointed out, over-connected relationships on the web incur excess positive feedback, so such relationships have extreme tendencies, such as failure leading to further failure and success to further success. Thus, if one has a problem with a friend on the web, there is a tendency for miscommunication to create further miscommunication.

SNSs often have unnecessary communication functions that sometimes enhance social risk. For example, Facebook has built a system that detects and analyzes the “face fingerprint” from the photographs that users upload. This system analyzes the human faces in each photo, and if friends’ face fingerprints are found, their names are displayed near their faces. For example, if one uploads a group photo from an alumni reunion, one can see the names of all of the alumni in the photo. This makes it convenient for one to look for a friend whose name one cannot remember; however, this system also encourages over-connection among alumni who do not get along with each other. In addition, if Facebook connects friends’ relationship metadata with the names on the group photo, it is possible to display their relationship status and dating history. Facebook users can choose whether their names are displayed when pictures of them are uploaded by other people; however, whether displayed or not, Facebook has still gathered and analyzed the face fingerprints of such pictures, which could pose some risks.

According to data from 2013, Facebook users upload about 350 million photos per day. Facebook therefore possesses a huge amount of face fingerprint data, and even if users stop using Facebook in the future, the company will retain this information. In June of 2012, Facebook acquired the Israeli company face.com at a value of 100 million USD. Face.com provided Facebook with the ability to analyze face fingerprints, and Facebook has been focusing on the analysis of photos and video ever since. In the future, if the secondary use of face fingerprint data on Facebook is not regulated, it is possible that personal information will be derived from photos taken on the street or video taken by surveillance cameras. When the technology associated with face fingerprinting can identify Facebook’s one-billion-person information database with high accuracy, the “world’s largest human flesh search system” will have reached completion. As a number of users have posted photos of their children on Facebook, we should strongly consider the risk of maintaining face fingerprints of these children into their adulthood. If Facebook were to go bankrupt, it could easily sell this personal data to a third party.

For these reasons, I believe that legal regulations should be created to limit the collection of biological information, such as face fingerprints, from videos and photos taken in public places.

Type 3: Low User Information Literacy

Of course, it is possible to reduce the risks of the outflow of personal information from SNSs if we can achieve information media literacy. It is helpful to use free services if users can change their default privacy settings in order to limit the exposure range of their personal information, and if they are careful about updating that information online. Yet, despite its privacy policy, Facebook—a private company—remains the world’s largest human flesh search system, outpacing other SNSs. For example, Twitter does not collect personal information and has relatively simple operational rules. Personal data on Twitter is not necessarily tied to one’s real name, so anonymity is higher than on Facebook and Twitter only promotes the secondary use of personal data that remains anonymous.

Lawrence Lessig pointed out that, even though web services are legitimate, it is necessary for IT companies to contribute the health of the democratic web

architecture. However, Facebook collects personal and biological information that is not related to the provision of their services. Facebook has been running ads based on the analysis of personal information, but they have not been open in explaining the criteria for the use of that information. Moreover, Facebook has changed its terms and conditions many times, even allowing them to be applied retroactively to past posts.

Despite these issues, I do not think that people in Japan are particularly interested in the risk of Facebook collecting their personal data. Since the “right to privacy” has not been specified in Japan’s constitution, the consideration of privacy policies has weak roots there. In Japan, there is no diplomatic ability to request restrictions on global platform companies like Facebook in the U.S. Whatever Facebook’s privacy policy may be, the site is hugely popular in Japan: users of Facebook now outnumber users of Mixi, which was the most popular SNS in Japan in 2011, and of Twitter, which was the most popular in 2012. It is important for Japanese people to accept the reality that Facebook has embarked on the analysis of one billion face fingerprints and has turned into the world’s largest human flesh search company.

For these reasons, I believe that legal regulations should be created to distinguish between personal information that is analyzed because users have agreed with the terms and conditions and personal information that is analyzed only on condition of anonymity.

Conclusion

One private company should not be able to decide what personal information should or should not be analyzed. That should be determined by law in accordance with the social norms of individual countries. People have a right to be forgotten, thus, biological information, search histories, and comments posted on the web should have a finite usage period, and biological information and non-anonymous personal information should not be sold without users’ consent. Just because Facebook provides a useful system for free, this does not give it the right to do business by using one billion people’s biological and personal information unconditionally. There are many complex issues in the world that cannot be resolved merely by clicking “Like.”

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Semantic Gaps Are Dangerous

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Abstract

Language adapts to the environment where it serves as a tool to communication. Language is a social agreement, and we all have to stick to both grammaticalized and non-grammaticalized rules in order to pass information about the world around us. As such language develops and adapts constantly.

Recently both media and migrations have accelerated considerably. In Europe and thus in Denmark homogenous populations have developed into multicultural ones. Language has not kept pace with this development, and millions of people have to adapt to this new situation with lightning speed.

That seems not to be possible. We have to use words, metaphors and comparisons containing adverse connotations, and this situation creates ways of using unpolite language and tends to create dangerous relations where special language creates problems that could be avoided if we had better language tools at hand. But we do not have these tools of communication, and we are in a situation today where media and specially digital and social media, supported by new possibilities of migration, create dangerous situations.

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Language is a social construct. As language users we need to respect the grammaticalised as well as the non-grammaticalised rules of a language when we wish to create an identity, express feelings, and communicate information on relations and logic we think that we find in the world around us. Within this framework, all the world's languages develop and adapt constantly.

In the recent past, both the media and the migration habits of people have caused the speed of this development to increase exponentially. In Europe, and thereby also Denmark, ancient, very homogenous populations, have developed into a relatively heterogeneous group. People with disparate existential perceptions, new customs, and other and different ways to express themselves, are met more often and more intensively than we have been used to. The Danish language has been unable to keep up with this development; with the natural consequence that millions of people have needed to get used to the new situation with the speed of light, and this does not appear to be without problems. We have to employ words, metaphors, and comparisons, with opposing connotations, and this language situation is paving the way for the use of discourteous language and the creation of dangerous situations where language, in itself, is creating problems which might be avoided if we had better linguistic tools available. But we simply do not possess these linguistic tools, and today, we are in a situation where the media, and in particular, the electronic and social media, are creating dangerous situations; and all supported by the increasing speed of information and migration.

How then can we avoid these inappropriate gaps in our language? Should we keep quiet and stop discussing particular subjects, or are there other possibilities of ensuring us an adequately encompassing language? By stopping discussion we create taboos.

Science of linguistics

Is it possible to study language independently of other sciences? The intuitive answer must be – hardly. Nevertheless, linguistics, especially since Aristotle's linguistic achievements of formulating structuralistic works, has concentrated on creating a justification as an autonomous scientific discipline. Until the previous millennium, this gathered around ethnocentrically examining and exhausting the phonological and morphological corpus of the Indo-European language. Not until late in the exercise of the discipline of linguistics, did functionalism become an equal partner. This is despite the fact that already Plato denoted the function of language as an important object of scientific investigation and description. The thorough and in-depth scientific research of meaning in language is new, and in the heyday of structuralism, had been virtually banished from the area of linguistics. For example, in the approach of the American linguistic structuralist, L. Bloomfield, the description of semantics was neglected. Thus, semantics was abandoned in the shadows of linguistics for all too long.

A generally acknowledged description of a language sign leads to a dichotomy between a unit of expression and a unit of meaning, where the smallest units are phonemes, which separate meaning, and morphemes, which bear meaning. In this connection, it is interesting that structuralism so categorically rejects semantics from linguistic research and description, as semantics is a crucial factor in structuralism's

definition of those units which form the basis of structuralism's stratification. Without semantics and consensus on the nature of semantics, there is no structural definition of basic units. Semantics must be harnessed; similarly the function of language must be studied to understand why, and under which conditions, we have, associate, and use, language.

Why the sounds of language are found in the patterns we know, have always puzzled, teased and fascinated linguists. But it has not yet proved possible to come anywhere even close to answering this question.

The functional side of language is however completely different; here it is possible, concisely and at an overall level, to summarize four general functions that apply to all the world's languages. These are the intentions which lie in people's actions, when they use language:

1. To describe how we think the world actually is (indicative construction)
2. To inquire how others think the world is (interrogative investigation)
3. To command, with the aim of getting the world to be as we want it to be (imperative)
4. To set out thoughts and desired worlds (optative construction)

With the content element of language, it is the case that in the languages of the world, an anchoring is found in relation to the world, nature and culture in which the individual language has to function. Here, subjects such as food and danger have played a significant role from ancient times, as it has always been vital for people to survive. This is achieved by finding food and by avoiding becoming food for others. Therefore, in every language there is an anchoring in nature and culture, with the focus on having language for food items and for dangerous objects, for animals, and for the vicissitudes of life. The more common the food item or danger is, the greater is the probability that language has a rich vocabulary to describe, guide, and/or warn about it.

Biological versus cultural roots

Whether the meaning element in the various world languages can thus be related to the special biology of humans has been the subject of much discussion. The likelihood of this is low, even if it also possible to find hierarchies, for example, in relation to the relation of the colour scale to physical, observable elements in nature. All the world's language have root words for black and white; followed by red, then blue, then yellow/green, where the languages are distributed so the first-mentioned colour requires to be laid before the others can follow. The hierarchy has though special variants in African languages where nuances and main groupings are completely different.

The cultural roots in the semantics of languages are much easier to find, so that words and vocabularies are tied to the cultures in which the languages have to function. Danish has an extensive vocabulary for referring to domestic farm animals. Conversely, there is no distinction in Danish between female and male midges, or even for the young of midges. Nor do snakes have special words for males, females or progeny. Snakes are rare and only one is venomous. It has its own name, which is a

compound; 'striking worm' (adder). But the farm's domestic animals are important as sources of income and food. So cows are female, bulls are male, calves are the young animals, heifers have not calved, and so on. Cultural traces can be found in the grammar of a language, though in more irregular patterns.

Language and thought

These considerations lead naturally to a re-consideration of the Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis on whether language is a limiting factor for human thought, in that it is only possible to think about and consider elements in our existence for which our language has elements/words/grammar. It could be tempting to accept the hypothesis and its limitations on our thoughts. Nevertheless, the heated discussions which arise when cultures meet seem to say something else. We can think longer and deeper than the (Danish) language would appear to contain elements to handle. We see and acknowledge conceptualizations which the language does not contain the means to precisely express. Let us then continue into the description and understanding of the semantics and constant development of language, and its adjustment to the culture within which it has to function.

Illusion of translation

When separation in the linguistic sign between the expression element and the meaning element occurs, we see that it is the meaning element that might be translated to other languages and thereby possibly understood by people in other cultures. But there is much unclear "mapping" between word and meaning, and translation and synonyms are perhaps an illusion whereby misunderstanding and conflict frequently arise. The meaning of words is determined by context and cultural preconceptions as, for example, when the relative meanings emerge in the following simple examples *large ant vs large elephant; the sun is red; she resembled a sack; and we tootled around town*. Or in interactions between the single words of the following phrases which determine the meaning of the whole phrase:

- Man hits dog with meat leg
- Man hits dog with wooden leg
- Man hits dog with broken leg
- Man finds dog with binoculars
- Man shoots dog with binoculars
- Man sees dog with binoculars
- Man captures dog with binoculars

Problem of managing the world

Language meaning is closely connected to categorization, i.e. that we group things mentally, and all instances from a category have something in common. Phenomena in the world relate to each other, and a conceptualization is a mental representation of phenomena which relate to each other, and they form a category. Conceptualization specifies how category membership hangs together. All words in a language have thus an underlying conceptualization, for example, such as *dog, table, religion, children, and family*. But all conceptualization is not necessarily represented by words, and here arises the core of the problem domain. As humans we do have subjects

(conceptualizations) for which we have no words, but which nonetheless we have an acute need to talk about. Here, it gets difficult to give tangible examples, precisely because we lack words to be able provide them. This is explosive material, through which we must pick our way with extreme care. Danes generally just borrow words from other languages or compose their own words from already available language material. This is fine as long as we are precise and the subject is not inflamed. But the least linguistic imprecision can lead to the most serious consequences if the subject is adequately inflamed. In Denmark we have experienced serious situations in the debates on, for example, depictions of, and expressing opinions about, religion, pedophilia and modern warfare, where our language has no adequately recognized socially accepted norms which encompass these conceptualizations.

Methods of structuring the world

People's conceptualizations are bound up with their way of perceiving the world, and perhaps they are also tied to cognitive economy – avoiding tautology. There seems to be a "trade-off" between economy, information loading, and retrieval time. One thing can belong to two categories simultaneously, such as, for example, *invisible thing* versus *believing in something*. What then separates things from one category, from things from another? Is there a hierarchy? We do not know. In any case, any hierarchies do not seem to be identical from one language to another. In connection with this organization of the world via language material, it is important to be aware that words both have a denotation and one or more connotations. Denotation is the word's basic meaning, i.e. the meaning that we have agreed upon for words such as for example, *horse*, *house*, and *nose*, while there is more doubt and disagreement on the connotations in words such as, for example, *caravan*, *pocket money* and *ageing burden*. Connotations are often conditioned by feelings or values and this creates a breeding ground for misunderstanding and a debate over the correct use of language. This can destroy a good atmosphere in a split second.

Colour of the moon

It becomes immediately much more difficult, or almost impossible, to ensure a good understanding of language when different cultures meet that each have their (physical) observable reality. In referential meaning theory, a word's *reference* (extension) is understood to be that which the word refers to in the wider world; objects are indicated via the extension. But a word's *meaning* (intension) is its underlying (abstract) concept. Intension is thus the abstract specification which determines how the word's meaning is related to other words. Intension defines the necessary and appropriate characteristics for a class membership.

- *|Moon| refers to a shining object in the night sky* (referent – extension);
- *|Moon| is also defined by being a concept; it is a shining thing you can see in the sky at night. |Moon| has a place in language as such a concept, and |moon| relates to (is in opposition to) e.g. |sun| and |stars| in Danish.*
- *|Moon| is called |måne| in Danish and approximately the same concept forms the basis (same intension). And the referent in the wider world is the same (same extension).*

- *|Queen| is called |dronning| in Danish; approximately the same concept which forms the basis for Danish and English (same intension). But the referent in the wider world is, on the face of it, probably not the same (different extension – Margrethe vs. Elizabeth).*

Prototype

But how do we explain the referential meaning of abstracts such as *security* and *justice*? Here, another possibility of explaining the meaning of language comes into the picture – a prototype, which is a typical family member. A prototype is an abstraction that represents the most common representative in a category – the mean representation for a category, in a Danish connection, for example, *sparrow*, *chair* and *hammer*. The degree of similarity with the prototype determines the member's status. The prototype is thus *the best example* from a concept, for example, such as *blackbird versus penguin; cow versus whale, dining chair versus camping chair*. A prototype forms a special kind of *scheme*, a framework for the organization of knowledge. But who decides what is prototypical? That is decided by a language community in fellowship, as a social process. Prototypes will thus vary from a society with one main culture to another with another main culture.

There is so much we do not understand

Metaphors are created to create understanding of, and for, the correlations in the world which people cannot grasp, and they build upon an extension of the similarity between two phenomena, for example, *a dishwasher can save time; life is a journey; she is up in the clouds; their love blossomed*. People have great difficulty in understanding phenomena such as *time, life, humour, and love*. We try to understand phenomena by comparing them with other, more tangible, phenomena, and by drawing on elements from these which we are capable of understanding. Metonymy builds on two phenomena typically, or in a particular instance, occurring (physically) together, and it is therefore possible to establish a connection between them, as in for example, *Karen Blixen is lying on the sideboard, or the kettle is boiling*. Metaphor and metonymy are two ways in which different meanings of one and the same word with several meanings can be related. This is a breeding ground for serious conflicts if the comparisons cross the boundaries for taboos in different cultures.

The same correlation is not found for synesthesia where there is a more indirect and abstract connection between conceptualizations such as, for example, *dark tones, black humour, light mood*. These connections between phenomena where language lacks specific words in particular categories, is, in many ways, culture specific. Translations and meetings of cultures can go horribly wrong if due care is not displayed in understanding both the sender's intention in relation to the receiver's preconceptions, and culture specific possibilities of understanding content and meaning. Do we then read and understand a text literally before we read and understand it figuratively? Many studies indicate that the answer is no.

Courtesy or its absence is, to a great degree, language and culture specific. Almost nothing general can be stated on this subject, and within the area of courtesy, the meaning of individual words is vacated and complete intentions must be expressed, more or less, obscurely. If these rules are not mastered then language does not

function, and the danger of conflict is imminent. In Danish, for example, it is polite to ask about the abilities of the recipient rather than willingness, when imperatives need to be expressed; for example, *can you reach the salt?* And *are you wearing a watch?* Both speech acts are quasi-imperatives. Give me the salt, and, tell me the time. A quite precise amount of overlap must be created for metaphors, metonymy and courtesy to function – not too much nor too little. We draw on metalinguistic language ability where we demand that the receiver be able to reflect on, and manipulate, language. On the one side is the phonological element, and on the other, the semantic.

Semantic gaps in cultural anchoring

Semantic gaps can be best understood from all the strata from which language is constituted and is used. Language is a living organism under constant development, and it is being continuously influenced by the social and cultural environment in which it is used. Ergo, we always meet language in use, with all forms of verbal interaction. And language dies out when it is not used or re-interpreted. The semantics of language is not a closed, self-propelled, and absolute system with one ultimate truth, but a resource which we scoop out when we use it. Semantic gaps are therefore extra dangerous, because the linguistic resources are thereby constrained and, in turn, trigger more gaps at all language levels included in the interaction. In this connection, the Australian linguist M.A.K. Halliday argues that language is built up from three kinds of meaning, and they are realized simultaneously in a semantic complexity with an *experiential*, an *interpersonal* and a *textual* aspect. These aspects distinguish themselves, precisely by a set of choices in a culturally anchored semiotic system, which falls apart when there are too many gaps, such as, for example, between parallel societies. This leads to the principal question of the range of the semiotic gaps, i.e.:

- (i) How do people use language?
- (ii) How is language organized for use?

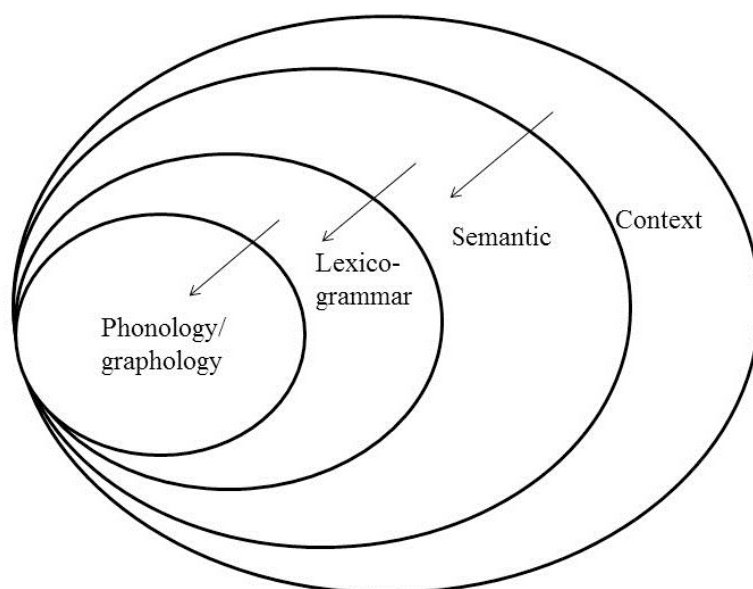
Regarding question (i), people use language to attain culturally appropriate goals, based on what a given genre encompasses of potentials. A novel can tell a story, a drama can outline conflicts, a philosophical text can discuss existential questions, a textbook can provide us with knowledge, and a journalistic text can deliver news from the great big world etc. All of these genres are the result of the cultural contexts in which they are anchored. Some genres will potentially contain more dynamite in those parts of the world that do not celebrate diversity and tolerance, but instead are fixed in a particular existential philosophy. Much has been attempted to limit the exercise of language resources and choices but it appears that this is becoming increasingly difficult in line with technological developments. The gap between an absolutist existentialist interpretation and the real world is growing day by day. Some still claim that the world is flat and the earth is the center of the universe, but the numbers who advocate these views is hardly likely to grow.

Even more than question (i), question (ii) places the focus on the extent of semantic gaps in a given, situational context and interaction. A given culture has specific potentials for a given genre. We feel most secure when a news programme on TV corresponds to our expectations regarding build up, choice of subject, anchor, dress,

word choice etc. and can fill in the semantic gaps ourselves, but someone with an immigrant background is completely unable to crack the code. Instead, they cocoon themselves because, otherwise, they feel in danger and insecure. This is a global phenomenon. Everywhere, it is precisely language resources that swing between something dangerous, or something that is innovative by setting an expression on something that has not been formulated before. Thus, new ‘semantic slots’ are created. The dynamic and usage of language can be described thus:

- (iii) Language usage is functional
- (iv) Language functions create meaning (semantics)
- (v) Semantics is influenced by the context in which it is included
- (vi) Language usage is a semiotic process in which semantics is created through potentials

Point (vi) indicates that the lack of language tools minimizes the semantic potentials in interaction and leaves gaps. Other forms of expression take over as symbols for content; whether as forms of dress, type of clothing, choice of hairstyle, or use of make-up, for example. Language transforms a potential for action to a semantic potential, as the essence is to create meaning, (point (iv)), either with the aid of an experiential (experience exchange) an interpersonal (between individuals) and/or a textual (through texts) basis. These global metafunctions individually organize a series of semantic dimensions and language layers that can be used for orientation of where we can determine various forms of gaps, which must be anchored in a given context. This can be illustrated thus:



The central stratum in any language is the lexico-grammatical, a language’s engine room, where one of language’s two content strata, is found. Lexico-grammar constitutes a language’s resource to ‘put into words’; i.e. express the semantic slots which are realized through a language’s grammatical structure and lexis (word choice). When words are lacking for conceptualization, semantic gaps, and language potential, is constrained, and symbols take over, which is a much more dangerous

form of interaction. Lexico-grammar leads into the semantic stratum – the second of language's content strata. Semantics is language's 'pumping station' – many semantic slots give greater capacity and thereby meaning resources, while semantic gaps, have a corresponding constraining effect; a kind of hole in the heart, which starves language of oxygen. When people wish to act in, or reflect on the world, they are provided with possibilities through semantization to slots; known or new. The semantic stratum connects lexico-grammar and the context, which is why the semantic slots, first and foremost, are impinged by the demands that contextual factors set out regarding putting extra-linguistic realities into words. Furthermore here we can identify inappropriate gaps in our language, which either cannot keep up, or are not allowed to be filled in.

Context's meta-linguistic make-up, is determined by the global and local circumstances (situational context) in which a language must function or collapse because of a lack of resources. Three variables have influence on the extent of semantic gaps in the situational context, as set out by Eggins ((1996): 36):

- (vii) Field (= subject choice)
- (viii) Tenor (= relation between sender and receiver)
- (ix) Mode (=method of adduction)

These three variables constitute the choice of metaphor and connotations. Field focuses on a social and cultural situation regarding a language interaction and denotes the semantic-bearing social interactions in the context itself and in the choice of subject. In many contexts, a subject is designated as religious existential philosophy and thus as blasphemous and subject to prohibition and edicts. Here, very many semantic gaps can be found. Field similarly includes those activities which fill in a subject with semantic meaning between inter-acting parties, or which makes them relevant for everyone. Ergo, field focuses on everything that can be communicated, or absence thereof.

Tenor puts the relations between sender and receiver in the centre, with the potential for the interacting parties through a pin pointing of their role functions and role relations, seen in a social and cultural perspective. These could be permanent characteristics for all the interacting relations created between them in a specific situation. Tenor thus focuses on those relations the interacting parties have with one another. In the Danish education system 'open ended' discussions are fundamental to everyone, while a religious philosopher's interpretation of edicts/prohibitions in many cultures constrains a potential for interaction for the receiver. The semantic slots for representations are minimal and not in any way open to debate.

Mode marks the role of language in the interaction as mode is a variable for language potential and special status in a situational context. Put another way, how language, as a whole, is used in a given situation context, is put under the microscope. The internet contains many modes, which is why the net globally is seen by many as dangerous because it is here that it is not possible to impose total prohibitions/edicts. The sending tenor can no longer be totally dominant but must accept semantic slots, for example through an extension of the interaction on the social network.

The three contextual variables are the central factors that represent the social context as semiotic environments in which language contains the realization of semantic intentions and goals. The contextual variables realize the semantic and the lexicogrammatical stratum. Field has its linguistic parallel in the experiential, tenor in the interpersonal and mode in the textual metafunction. The first two metafunctions express experience and inter-subjective interpretations thereof, i.e. areas that need to be put into words. The absence of words triggers semantic gaps which has the consequence that formulating content, for example, through a text or expression, is never achieved. All levels gain significance for how much can be drawn upon when wishing to express oneself on content or point of view.

A number of different cultural and social situational contexts can illustrate these relations regarding semantic gaps:

In a Danish context, the former prime minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, during an election campaign, in a statement on the Danish People's Party (a right wing, populist party which had little electoral support at that time) said:

The Danish People's Party will always be beyond the pale

Nyrup's statement never triggered any real discussion such as, for example, *Why that?* His 'mode' made a verbalization which could have put words to the arguments and interim results, impossible. The semantic gaps became too dangerous. His 'field' leads up to such a verbalization because the Danish People's Party draws voters from the Social Democrats, but his 'tenor' polarizes. Many consider that this statement is politically correct and have no inclination to continue the discussion because it would enter into an area of 'touchy' political subjects such as, for example, immigration and integration. It is better to attempt to kill it through silence, also because language lacks the nuanced words that refer to conceptualizations. Instead the media makes it a question of personalities, and thereby shifts the focus.

The right-liberal politician, Søren Pind, when taking up his position as minister for integration and equality, was asked by a journalist, how he understood 'integration of immigrants' and replied, that for him, the aim was not 'integration' but 'assimilation'. 'Integration' was only a step on the road. Søren Pind attempted to open up for further discussion of his 'field' by putting a goal into words through a series of 'modes', from speeches in parliament to interviews. The supporters said 'courageous' and 'bravo' while his political opponents used terms such as 'intolerance' and 'stigmatization' of a particular group of the population. Others thought that that it was a question of religious freedom without however being able to fill in the semantic gaps on why a particular philosophy of life closes itself off.

Art can express semantic gaps that are difficult to define through language alone. In Denmark a young poet, Yahya Hassan, with a Palestinian background, aroused a furore with his collection of poems of the same name. It became the best-selling debut collection in the history of Danish literature, with a run of more than 100,000 copies. In his poems, Hassan critically examines his upbringing which was marked by violence, neglect, and criminality. He puts words to taboo 'fields' against a Muslim cultural background, and puts into words his conceptualizations on social fraud, violence against children, and the lack of integration in Danish society, all intertwined

with religious dogma. As 'tenor' Hassan triggered emotions 'for' and 'against'. Some people feel validated, while others are sceptical or become angry, as religion, to them, is dogma with no potential for discussion.

He must now be protected by an extensive security operation and receives death threats and is assaulted in Copenhagen's main railway station, and in Palestine. The experiential semantic complexity, in religious existential philosophies, is filled in by Hassan with words of great interpersonal impact. The poetic metafunction codes open for the controversial interpretations and identifications, and in this connection, Hassan states in an interview:

I am not on an errand to criticize Islam. My criticism is more a criticism of religion. Those things I criticize Islam for: religious indoctrination, intransigence, and a patent on the truth, are fundamental to all religions. (...)

Previously, this here was local and family business which affected only me and my immediate circle. Then it turned into a public event and then the reactions became violent.

(Berlingske e-newspaper: 7 June 2014)

Yahya Hassan's poems, with their transformational semantic consequences, display that it demands courage to stand up against these kinds of Fields, Tenors and Modes.

Summary

Language develops continuously and normally incorporates new semantic of the world. But the fast growing media world and the increasing number of immigrants into Europe, has resulted in a normal organic development ending in an imbalance where homogenous cultural areas have been split into multi-cultural, sub-segments. The result of this is that there are semantic gaps at all linguistic levels; theoretical, methodological, and practical. Our cognition has been unable to meet the furious tempo of this development or also, development has been rejected and people have instead retreated into a time long gone, where things were comprehensible, but which is completely unable to encompass the realities of the modern world. Both conditions mean that an analysis of certain subjects' 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' and associated communicative metafunctions, clearly indicate that we must either keep quiet and accept that certain fields are taboo, or words must also be applied to new conceptualizations. The future tends to resemble the past: linguistic change takes time.

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The logo for the International Association for Applied Linguistics (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs: a light blue arc on the left and a light red arc on the right, which together form a partial circle around the text.

A New Method of Resistance to The Political Power: Social Media

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Abstract

Does social media have a voice of authority over the political power? Nowadays, one of the most controversial issues in modern societies is social media. Social media sites used for sharing content such as music and videos, for finding friends, for following current events, have transformed into a tool for struggling with the political power. Especially in developing countries like Turkey, people have recently been using the social media in their endeavours to resist the political power actively. Social media tools such as Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, which were first used for entertainment, games and advertisement, have now turned into political environments where discussions on politics have been formed. Social media can have a role in determining the agenda, and it is even used by political powers in some countries to assess public opinion. This study will examine whether the reactions on social media influence the decisions taken by the political power and the projects to be realized. This study will emphasize how social media discussions on the controversial actions of the political power led to a negative public opinion of the government since 1st January 2013. In sum, whether the social media has a function of controlling the political power will be examined and the influence of social media on politics will be studied.

Keywords: social media, technology, political power, resistance

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Introduction

Technology has become a crucial part of people's lives and, people determine their statuses in the social space by use of technology. Today technology effects human life considerably in all aspects. Technology definitely makes human life easier; nevertheless one of the popular statements made by some groups of people recently is that technology harms the traditional values. This can partly be perceived as a true statement in terms of communication technologies. Technology is conceived to make communication indirect and it almost abolished the most influential way of communication "face to face communication". Technology has turned asocial into e-social. Not only asocial individuals transformed into e-social people but also sociable people are becoming e-social.

It is not possible to forecast the future effects and prevent the negative effects of technology on individuals and the society when it appears for the first time. In order to apprehend the effects of technology on humanity, we should examine the history of technology meticulously. In this paper the impacts of communication technology, especially of internet, on individuals and the society are studied. The study dwells on social media which arose by the internet becoming so widespread and turned into a tool for social struggle against the political authority in the modern society. The efficiency of social media in controlling the political power is scrutinised. The study refers to theories of McLuhan and Castells in order to describe the power and the effects of the internet on society.

People keep up with the technological developments in their daily life. Today man has developed extensions for practically everything he used to do with his body (McLuhan, 1962, p. 4). According to McLuhan, technological tools are adopted by people as a part of their body. Technology has made the human life and the society dependant on itself.

History of Technology

McLuhan analysed the outcomes of technology in the historical process in his work *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962). Technologies like writing, alphabet, paper all have transformed the society since 3000s BC, but the breaking point was the invention of the printing press. He states that printing was the first mechanization of an ancient handicraft and led easily to the further mechanization of all handicrafts (McLuhan, 1962, p. 44). Invention of print technology is a fundamental step laying the groundwork for Enlightenment Age in Europe. Access to information was much easier after the invention of print, by virtue of books, magazines, newspapers. Society of the dark ages started to transform into the modern society.

Walter Ong examines the relation between orality and writing in his work *Orality and Literacy* (2002). He argues that writing from the beginning enhanced orality, making it possible to organize the 'principles' or constituents of oratory into a scientific 'art' (Ong, 2002, p. 9). Literacy is absolutely necessary not only for the development of science but also for history, philosophy, explicative understanding of literature and of any art, and indeed for the explanation of language itself, including oral speech (Ong, 2002, p. 14). Human intellect has improved to a great degree with the introduction of writing. Invention of writing has a profound role in the process of transformation of

the human consciousness. Ong notes that; “*Without writing, the literate mind would not and could not think as it does, not only when engaged in writing but even when it is composing its thoughts in oral form.*” (Ong, 2002, p. 77).

Ong argues that oral consciousness and literary consciousness operates differently in terms of conceptual thinking. Ong refers to Alexander Romanovich Luria’s experiment in *Cognitive Development: Its Cultural and Social Foundations* (1976) to explain the contrasts between cognitive processes among literate and illiterate persons. Luria’s experiment suggests that the illiterate subjects of the study had difficulty about the questions on defining objects, articulating self-analysis, inferential reasoning, classifying objects or situations into groups, and dealing with abstract concepts. On the other hand, the literate subjects gave certain answers in compliance with their literacy levels (Ong, 2002, p. 48-54).

Knowledge and information have always been central in all historically known societies. The shift from orality to literacy brought together a wide opportunity for reproduction of the knowledge. Thanks to the invention of the fundamental technologies like the print, the flow of knowledge was much easier than before; ideas of philosophers, scientists, other intellectuals; religions, the substances of religions like Bible were disseminated in a wide area. These advancements altered the human consciousness, points of views, behaviours, all about humanity.

The invention of print by Gutenberg in 1436 can be regarded as the most substantial phenomenon preparing the base for Renaissance. The 16th century Renaissance was an age on the frontier between two thousand years of alphabetic and manuscript culture on the one hand, and the new mechanism of repeatability and quantification, on the other (McLuhan, 1962, p. 141). Thanks to the print technology knowledge was recorded and duplicated, making it much easier to access to information. This constituted one of the fundamental steps for the Age of Enlightenment.

As McLuhan cites, Alexis De Tocqueville points out the print affecting the French revolution. The printed word, achieving cultural saturation in 18th century homogenized the French nation. The typographic principles of uniformity, continuity and lineality had overlaid the complexities of ancient feudal and oral society. The Revolution was carried out by the literati (McLuhan, 1964, p. 206). In the French Revolution, print, thus proliferation of the literary works had a profound role in spreading the new ideologies about freedom, equality and transforming the society from the feudal structure to the modern society. De Tocqueville states that some of the fundamental reasons of the French Revolution, as in the cases of America and Europe are the increase in literacy and the literary man who started to deal with and get involved in politics. This process of literacy influenced all Europe in the eighteenth century towards the public movements of labor, democracy inasmuch as the human consciousness transformed thanks to literacy (De Tocqueville, 1856, p. 170-182).¹

Habermas renders the ascent of literacy and the construction of public space in Europe in his work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. He explains how literacy shapes the society and carries it to a further level. In his work Habermas states

¹ For detail: Alexis De Tocqueville, *Old Regime And The Revolution*, New York, Harper & Brothers Publishers, Fanklin Square, 1856, pp. 170-182

that a public sphere, similar to the one today, was built in Europe in the 17th century by the bourgeoisie. He says the basis of this public sphere was set by the literate people in the bourgeoisie, fundamentally the royal class, and conceptualizes the situation as literary public sphere. Proliferation of the materials such as print, newspapers, magazines, books, constitutes the essentials that foster the literary public. According to Habermas, thanks to bourgeoisie the literary public shifted from the royal people to the folk. French *Salons*, English coffee houses, became the critical reasoning settings of the bourgeois public sphere in which literature and art discussions were made (Habermas, 1991, p. 29). This conglomeration appears as critical reasoning in the public sphere. (Habermas, 2009, p. 96-97). Works of literature and art contribute to the process of critical reasoning. The critical reasoning in daily life spreads to areas of economics, politics, after literature and art. Psychological interests also guided the critical discussion (*Raisonnement*) sparked by the products of culture that had become publicly accessible: in the reading room and the theater, in museums and at concerts (Habermas, 1991, p. 29).

Habermas states that the individuals of the bourgeoisie who act in their subjective autonomy became concerned in literary actions, literature, media, and theatre. These evolutions reinforced critical reasoning in public sphere. The literary actions of bourgeoisie in their private space enhanced publications, media, literature, libraries and so on. Critical reasoning about political and other social issues, led to a political public sphere which is more overt. Bourgeoisie had a role in organizing the civil society and started to question the monarchy with the strength it takes from the private public sphere (Habermas, 2009, p. 128).

While scrutinizing the public sphere built by the bourgeoisie, Habermas put an emphasis on, reading, writing, arts, literature, publications of news, magazines, etc. As Habermas reflects in his thoughts, the public sphere is comprised of literate people, and shaped by literary actions in other words medium-writing- has a crucial role on the formation of the public sphere. In Habermas' ideas, public space is an issue related to the literary public sphere which is related to literary actions. As literary actions are based on writing, public sphere is structured by the advent of writing as a medium.

Medium Is the Message

The techno-determinist intellectual McLuhan analysed the impacts of the medium on the society thoroughly. According to McLuhan, medium has a more preeminent and influential role than the message in today's society. McLuhan states that messages, as the content, seem to transform the society; nevertheless it is the medium that makes the message cycle possible. People adapt themselves and their messages to the medium they use to convey their message. The medium used for conveying the message determines human behaviour. McLuhan as a techno-determinist intellectual appreciated the medium more than the message with his argument: "Medium is the message." (1964). The substantial point having effected McLuhan is that the medium providing the message cycle determines the way of our lives. The personal and social consequences of any medium -that is of any extension of ourselves- result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves or by any new technology. The society is constantly changing and prospering thanks to technology. McLuhan emphasises that medium has a profound role in the formation

of the society. He explains his statement by the railway illustration. He says the railway didn't introduce movement or transportation or wheel or road into human society, but it accelerated and enlarged the previous human functions, creating totally new kinds of cities, new kinds of work and leisure. He asserts that it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of public association and action. He criticises the fact that, content is always perceived as more important to human beings than the shape or ways; it is only too typical that the content of any medium blinds us to the character of the medium (McLuhan, 1964, p. 203).

People always ignore the medium of the communication, ignore the process and obsessed with the result that is the message. People are not aware of the fact that the medium of any communication has undeniable effects on human. McLuhan argues that the medium influences the human body and the brain unconsciously. On the other hand, the message influences the brain consciously.²

Even though, medium and the message are perceived as literally distinguished concepts in communication, McLuhan states that the effect of the medium is made strong and intense just because it is given another medium as content (McLuhan, 1964, p. 207). The content of the media is writing, the content of writing is speech. McLuhan points out the fact that the effects of the technology on the society cannot be understood without taking the medium into account.

By communication, ideas, attitudes, values, behavioural patterns, that is, culture is transformed. As the technology has advanced, so the media have improved and become more complex. The area of transforming messages is expanded thanks to the mass media. Accordingly, the contents of the messages are also modified. This situation leads us to the idea that message is not trivial but, spreading the message to large masses is of bigger importance. The message is constructed according to the medium, thus, the medium appears as the message.

At present due to the mass media, spreading messages is much easier and quicker. Thus, the dissemination of information in such short time and such easily, precipitates the globalization process. "*McLuhan examines the effects of media, beginning from the print to the television, and suggests that electronical media will turn the world into a global village by spreading the cultural elements worldwide.*" (Uslu Ata, 1985, p. 24). Due to mass media, the time concept needed for transmitting the cultural values, ideas and so on, is eliminated. And this fosters globalization process.

This study is a review of the technological advances such as writing, print, and the impacts of these advancements on the society in the historical perspective referring mainly to thoughts of the intellectuals McLuhan, and Ong. The following part of the study focuses on the social media which is a leading factor affecting all humanity and based on the Internet technology; the influences of social media on society; and how the public sphere is determined by the social media.

Network Society

Castells put forward the concept; *the network society* which he defines as the social structure resulting from the interaction between the new technological paradigm and

² Access address: www.mala.bc.ca/soules/paradox/mcluhan.html, access date: 03.04.2013.

social organization at large (Castells, 2005, p. 3). Technology is a prerequisite for the emergence of a new form of social organization based on networking. This is due to the diffusion of networking in all realms of activity on the basis of digital communication networks (Castells, 2005, p. 3). Thanks to the networks information can be shared worldwide in a moment, and information has no boundaries. This makes the network society global as Castells says. The network society is based on networks, and communication networks transcend boundaries, it is based on global networks (Castells, 2005, p. 4).

According to Castells, network society can be defined as a social structure based on networks operated by information and communication technologies based in microelectronics and digital computer networks that generate, process, and distribute information on the basis of the knowledge accumulated in the nodes of the networks (2005, p. 7).

The network society is also associated with a transformation of sociability. Castells states that,

What we observe is not the fading away of face to face interaction or the increasing isolation of people in front of their computers. We know, from studies in different societies, that in most cases, Internet users are more social, have more friends and contacts, and are more socially and politically active than non-users. (Castells, 2005, p. 11)

The frequency of internet use in daily life is linked to a more active social life and political attitude. Moreover, Castells describes the network society as a hypersocial society, rather than society of isolation (Castells, 2005, p. 11).

With the introduction of networks into people's life and occupying an important part of our lives, the concept of sociability has gained a different meaning. It does not only stem from the networks and the internet technologies. It is also a consequence of the change in the structure of the society and the point of view about the logic embedded in the communication networks. At this point, the phenomenon of networked individualism emerges in that social structure and historical evolution induce the emergence of individualism as the dominant culture of our societies, and the new communication technologies perfectly fit into the mode of building sociability along self-selected communication networks. Thus, the network society is a society of networked individuals (Castells, 2005, p. 12).

However, individualism may also be a form of 'collective identity. All identities are constructed. The construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework. I propose, as a hypothesis, that, in general terms, who constructs collective identity, and for what, largely determines the symbolic content of this identity. (Castells, 2010b, p. 7)

A chief characteristic of the network society is the shift in the context of communication. The realms of communication have changed from interpersonal into media based communication in the network society. What transformed is not only the society, but also the nature of the media and communication.

Communication consists of some main elements which effect the transmission between the channels included, with various aspects. Castells elaborates this as follows;

Communication constitutes the public space, i.e. the cognitive space where people's minds receive information and form their views by processing signals from society at large. While interpersonal communication is a private relationship, shaped by the actors of the interaction, media communication systems sets the relationship between the institutions and organizations of society and people at large, not as individuals, but as a collective receiver of information, even if ultimately information is processed by each individual according to her personal characteristics. This is why the structure and dynamics of socialized communication is essential in the formation of consciousness and opinion, at the source of political decision making. (Castells, 2005, p. 12)

The communication system has transformed into a mostly digital form than the former structure which was based on manuscript and it has become interactive. Owing to the new communication system, a virtual culture has arisen. In the network society, virtuality is the foundation of reality through the new forms of socialized communication (Castells, 2005, p. 14). What characterizes the culture of real virtuality is the mixing of themes, messages, images, and identities in a potentially interactive hypertext (Castells, 2010c, p. 256-257). The individual is a more active component of the new digital communicative system. With the digital communication system, as Castells notes societies have moved from a mass media system to a customized and fragmented multimedia system, where audiences are increasingly segmented. Because the system is diversified and flexible, it allows a much greater integration of all sources of communication into the same hypertext (Castells, 2005, p. 13).

Since politics is largely dependent on the public space of socialized communication, the political process is transformed under the conditions of the culture of real virtuality (Castells, 2005, p. 14). Political attitudes, are substantially affected by the constituents of communication such as the messages, the agent and the medium.

History of Social Media

Although the concept of social media, which occupies an undeniably big part of our lives today, looks like recent phenomena, its roots date back to 1969.³

Danah Boyd and Nicole Ellison define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3)

³ http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/social-media-1969-2012_b45869

view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd, Ellison, p. 2007).

As we can see from Boyd's definition, social media are Web sites, individuals and groups create and exchange content and engage in person-to-person and group conversations. According to Boyd's definition, the first recognizable social network site launched in 1997. SixDegrees.com, the first recognised social media site, allowed users to create profiles, list their Friends and, beginning in 1998, surf the Friends lists (Boyd, Ellison, p. 2007).

As the internet technology progressed and was spread to a greater area in the world, the population of people engaged in social media increased considerably. The internet has started to take up a larger part of people's lives and this led to some changes in the social structure. The lifestyles, attitudes, behaviors, ways of thinking have evolved in accordance with the internet. The introduction of *facebook.com* (2004), *youtube.com* (2005), *twitter.com* (2006) and *weblogs* have paved the way for the network society of today. Most human actions have been transported into virtual world by the social media. To illustrate, face-to-face communication has been diminished and communication environment carried into the internet. As such, social actions, protests have been organized through social media recently (Storck, 2011, p. 10-13). Social movements were transported into virtual environment from real-life settings. The entertainment aim of social media with the content such as photos, videos, games, shifted to a medium for protests. Social movements of all kind, from environmental movements to right-wing extremist ideologies (e.g. Nazism, racism) took advantage of the flexibility of the Net to voice their views, and to link up across the country and across the globe (Castells, 2001, p. 54).

Castells remarks some points about the effects of computer sciences on society.

Networks became the most efficient organizational forms as a result of three major features of networks which benefited from the new technological environment: flexibility, scalability, and survivability. Flexibility is the ability to reconfigure according to changing environments and retain their goals while changing their components, sometimes by passing blocking points of communication channels to find new connections. Scalability is the ability to expand or shrink in size with little disruption. Survivability is the ability of networks, because they have no single center and can operate in a wide range of configurations, to withstand attacks to their nodes and codes because the codes of the network are contained in multiple nodes that can reproduce the instructions and find new ways to perform. (Castells, 2009, p. 23; 2004, p. 5-6)

Life has been transported to the virtual environment. Social struggle processes have been carried out in virtual settings recently. Some segments of the society ensure their maintenance on the internet and the major communication tool they use to organize is the "social media". As Castells argues, we are living in the network society and we are developing new methods and strategies to keep up with the new technologies.

In the network society, the structure of social movements has also mutated, arranged on the networks. The former style of organization for social movements which were directed from and gathered in a central space has been modified by the internet phenomenon. By using the Internet, the social movements do not need a centralized,

command structure invested with authority and decision-making power. Different groups would call on different messages, and present their views, and their conflicts, to everybody via the Net (Castells, 2010b, p. 154-155).

The social media has a big influence on the governments' actions. We can state that social media today is an effective control mechanism on the political power. This means a big change in the structure of the society, and the nature of the media. We can see the transformation in the aims of using social media from past to the present. Social media experienced a shift in aims from leisure time activity, to a public space where most people's life is influenced in various aspects. And the governments appreciate the importance of social media. As they see the social media as a threat to their authority. This is also due to the fact that there is an intensive flow of information which has an enlightening role on humanity. At present people are more aware of their rights and organizing through the social media is much easier.

Social Media and Turkey (2013-2014)

This study scrutinies the agenda set upon some decisions or implementations of the government being reflected on the social media during the process between 1 January 2013 and 1 June 2014. It also examines in what ways this agenda influenced the political power's decisions. In the past 1,5 years time, the agenda of Turkey was quite busy. The current political events had a considerable part on the agenda of social media. Five leading events, which made an overwhelming impression on social media, are examined in detail with their reasons, with their reflections on the social media, and the consequents.

(2013 May-June): The Gezi park Protests began on 29 May 2013 and lasted about a month. The protest, which began around Gezi Park (Istanbul) by a small group of people against the construction of a building in Gezi Park's place, was spread to all İstanbul in a short time. And then, social media getting engaged in the process, the protests spread all over Turkey even to some parts out of Turkey. The number of the twitter users which is 1,8 million on 29 May 2013, had risen to over 9,5 million people by 10 June 2013.⁴ After a month, the Project was given up. The Project of the building in Gezi Park was prevented by the help of social media. The protests for saving the Gezi park turned into a protest stream againsts the government. After these events, blocking of social media sites entered on the agenda of the government.

(2013 May-June) The third bridge in İstanbul has been a current issue discussed on the social media especially on twitter. People were against the construction of the bridge because the trees in the area of the Project were to be cut.⁵ The government didn't give up its decision though. The construction of the 3rd bridge is going on.

(2013 November) Prime Minister announced in his statement: "Male and female students cannot be roommates and share the same house, the houses will be inspected,

⁴ Serdar KUZULUOĞLU, "Gezi Parkı Eylemlerinin Sosyal Medya Karnesi" (Evaluation of the Gezi Park Protests on Social media), *Radikal* Newspaper, 19.06.2013, (http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/m_serdar_kuzuloglu/gezi_parki_eylemlerinin_sosyal_medya_karnesi-1138146)

⁵ "Üçüncü köprü için ağaç katliamı" (Massacre of trees for the third bridge in İstanbul), *Gerçek Gündem*, (<http://www.gercekgundem.com/galeri/istanbul/2342/ucuncu-kopru-icin-agac-katliami#>).

because it is not appropriate for our conservative society structure.”⁶ After the Prime Minister’s talk, this statement was carried into the agenda of the social media. Then the prime ministry made a new announcement: “there are not inspections to the houses, the inspections will be carried out only in dorms.”⁷ This plan was drawn back after the reactions on the social media.

(2014 January-February) The 3rd Airport construction Project got negative reaction because of the trees to be cut and got in the social media agenda. According to the news text published in *Cumhuriyet*, “657.950 trees were going to be cut and 1.855.391 trees were going to be moved to other places.”⁸ After it was carried to the court, the court decided to stop the building of the Project but the final decision of the government on the issue is not certain.

(2013-2014) The protests against the construction of new prime ministry building in *Atatürk Orman Çiftliği* (a big park in Ankara) began on social media. On the day the decision of the government about the construction was announced, the event became the trending topic on social media. On the same day, the relevant hashtag became the top second on twitter.⁹ The construction of this project has begun. After the project was sued by the association of Forest Engineers, the court’s decision about the project was to cancel the project.¹⁰ Notwithstanding, the construction is going on.

Conclusion

The process of Gezi Park protests is a breaking point in social media in Turkey. Turkish society noticed the power of social media after these protests. The sample events given in the analyses part of the society caused some dramatic changes in Turkey. And social media played a driving force role in organizing people during the protests on these events. Eventhough some protests didn’t achieve their goals, there was a change in people’s consciousness. People became more sensitive about political and social issues and the policies of the government have been discussed social media.

The power of social media in Turkey formed a pressure on the political power. The government blocked some social media sites in order to control the social movements on social media. After the corruption scandal in Turkey on 17 December 2013, the

⁶ “Spor Toto ve Milli Piyango’da sürpriz hamle” (Surprise in the lottery), *Zaman* Newspaper, 04.11.2013 (http://www.zaman.com.tr/politika_spor-toto-ve-milli-piyangoda-surpriz-hamle_2161542.html).

⁷ “Başbakanlık: Evlere denetim yok, talimat yurtlar için” (The inspections are only for the dorms not for the houses), *Hürriyet Gazetesi*, 04.11.2013, (<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/25043121.asp>).

⁸ “Üçüncü havalimanı için büyük katliam: İşte resmi rakamlar”, (The massacre for the third airport: the official numbers), *Cumhuriyet* Newspaper, 09 Haziran 2014, (http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/80807/Ucuncu_havalimani_icin_buyuk_katliam__iste_re_smi_rakamlar.html#).

⁹ “Yeni Başbakanlık binası için Atatürk Orman Çiftliği Gazi Yerleşkesi’nin seçilmesi sosyal medyada büyük tepkiye neden oldu” (The project of the residence for the prime ministry in Atatürk Orman Çiftliği raised reactions on the social media), Access address: <http://www.emlaktasondakika.com/t/Ataturk-Orman-Ciftligi-Gazi-Yerleskesi/Ataturk-Orman-Ciftligine-Basbakanlik-binasi-sosyal-medyayi-salladi/35244.aspx>, access date: 04.07.2014).

¹⁰ “AOC’de yapılan Başbakanlık binası için şok karar” (The shock decision for the prime ministry residence), *Dünya* Newspaper, 04.03.2014, (<http://www.dunya.com/aocde-yapilan-basbakanlik-binasi-icin-sok-karar-221050h.htm>).

tape records were spread via social media and it reduced the prestige of the government. Towards the local elections on 30 March 2014, the government blocked access to the sites twitter.com and then youtube.com. After the elections both sites were opened to access. Likewise, in some countries social media sites are totally banned in order to prevent the organizations of social movements. These prohibitions point out to the power of social media.

As the scholars McLuhan, Castells, Ong also states, medium has always pioneered the society throughout the history. The influence of the medium on the society, which started with the invention of writing, goes on today with the enormous effects of the internet media and other technological tools on society. The medium which conduced to abolishment of kingdoms, changed political and social structures dramatically, has never lost its power. And the fact that the political power regards the social media as a danger demonstrates this power of the medium clearly.

The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs. The upper arc is light blue and the lower arc is light red, creating a circular frame around the text.

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The Reproduction of The Image of Traditional Turkish Women's Role in Commercial Television

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Abstract

The national television channels strengthen the current perception about Turkish women. Gender discrimination can be observed when the presenters of a variety of television programs are examined on the basis of gender. When programs are examined in detail, it is notable that women are generally hired to present programs based on magazine press such as dating games and cooking programs while men present programs on more serious issues such as discussion programs, quiz shows and news. It is considered that the reasons for this attitude stem from the general perception about women in Turkey. The channels employ female presenters for some certain programs, aiming to increase the ratings. This situation reproduces and reinforces the current perception about the women and their traditional positions in Turkish society. In this study, the presenters of all genres of programs on Show TV, ATV, Star TV, Fox TV, Kanal D, Samanyolu TV, Kanal 7, NTV, Haber Türk, CNN Türk ve TRT 1 with the highest ratings among the other channels will be investigated in terms of gender. Moreover, the study will scrutinize what kind of image of femininity the channels try to represent. In summary, the study will try to explain the reasons for preferring female labour in media. The necessary information will be collected by analysing the TV channels between 12-25 May.

Keywords: gender, discrimination, programs, television, roles

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Introduction

From the ancient eras to modern times, all people have lived according to the norms which were determined and reinforced by the society. It is perceived that disregarding these patterns and behaving accordingly is almost impossible and the society does not generally allow the individuals to question them. The society teaches the individuals how to behave at different ages and ambiances. It becomes almost impossible to get out of these patterns as the people perceive them based on religion, traditions and customs since people disregarding the codes and behave in this way are thought to have immorality and disharmony. The people are sometimes excluded from the society when they get out of the patterns. Therefore, people prefer to comply with them instead of being excluded. However, it is not true to remark these codes are unchangeable. They do change but this evolution necessitates a quite long historical process.

The process in question is a profound sociologic question of debate. In this study the relationship between the determined social norms and codes members of a society have in their minds, the sexist view against women and the reflections of this view in media in the use of women as a workforce in media are going to be emphasized.

Gender and the Society

The society is a strict teacher who teaches how to behave or treat other people, what to do in some certain conditions. There is no doubt that the policies of the leading authority and media have a deep influence on constructing the gender roles, too. As Fiske argues, characters on television are not just representations of individual people but are encodings of ideology (Fiske, 1987). Media is a tool for transmitting the rules and values of the governments. The norms and ideas of the hegemonic cultural discourse teach how to be good “girls, boys, men and women” with some social codes to the individuals. In *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler asks a basic question related to the role and influence of the society on gender as follows:

Is there “a” gender which persons are said to have, or is it an essential attribute that a person is said to be, as implied in the question “What gender are you?” When feminist theorists claim that gender is the cultural interpretation of sex or that gender is culturally constructed, what is the manner or mechanism of this construction? If gender is constructed, could it be constructed differently, or does its constructedness imply some form of social determinism, foreclosing the possibility of agency and transformation? (Butler, 1999, p. 11).

Therefore, the role of social power and its impact on constructing the gender roles should be examined. It is a well-known fact that culture has an enormous effect on shaping the social norms. Does it have the same perpetual influence on determining the gender roles? Simone de Beauvoir suggests in *The Second Sex* “one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one.” For Beauvoir, gender is “constructed. According to her, one “becomes” a woman, but always under a cultural compulsion to become one and the compulsion does not come from “sex” (Butler, 1999, p. 12).

There are a great many structures and reasons determining the gender roles. However, the most basic ones are religion and customs in oriental societies. These two concepts

are seen as interrelated. The roles are sometimes identified by holy texts while being set by cultural traditions. The society generally does not allow its members to interrogate these values and make them long lasting components of the society, maintaining its strong structure. Gender roles- in some oriental countries such as Turkey- will be examined in this title.

In societies with dominant oriental norms, women are attributed some traditional roles as follows: Dealing with domestic work, making their husbands happy, not being interested in politics and economics, not participating in business life, looking good etc. These are the features of an ideal woman according to most of the people living in oriental societies. In our era, not only society but also the mass media determine and impose these patterns upon women. Mass media also affect the preferences of women with the contents of the programs addressing to the traditional women. A study carried out by Radio and Television Supreme Council researched for the programs watched most by women. Its results were in line with the gender roles attributed to the women, %59 of the participants reported that they watched television dramas which include examples of daily lives of typical women. Programs about education and documentaries were the programs preferred least. Consequently, traditional stereotypes are both generated and regenerated by the society and the mass media.

The Representation of Women In Media

Television fictionalises and creates its own social reality and transmits it to every segment of the society. In time, fiction can be transformed into social reality or vice versa. People can be persuaded that the world in which they live is very similar to the fictionalised world. Audience can have difficulty in distinguishing the fictional world from real life. Heavy viewers of television tend to perceive the real world like the one they see on the screen.

As George Gerbner states television is a centralized system of story-telling. Its drama, commercials, news and other programs bring a coherent system of images and messages into every home (Gerbner, 2000, pp. 43-67). It also influences the way how we perceive the reality and evaluate it.

In media, we encounter women with the traditional roles set by patriarchal values. In most contexts reinforcing the man dominant norms women are presented as the people who are deceived, exposed to violence, sex objects especially in eastern societies. The occupations, their education level and academic careers are not the popular topics accommodated on the screen.

According to the report on Women and Media prepared by General Directorate on the Status of Women (2008), women are generally confined to two roles: bad woman and a good housewife. Women seen on the screen generally are busy with cleaning the houses, cooking meals, taking care of their children, gossiping, chatting on daily issues. It is noteworthy that various lifestyles of women are not commonly included. Conversely, women who do not stick to the limited codes are marginalized by the society or the persons around. They are accused of not being an “ideal” woman.

Even the participation of the women into business life is so limited and it is presented with a suitable basis for the gender roles such as giving them the role of nurses,

secretaries, babysitters etc. Hence, the existing perception about the women in social structure is reproduced and strengthened by mass media.

Gencel Bek and Binark (2000) argue that the generation of gender discrimination in the representation of women by media is related to the fact that people preparing these contents are generally men (Gencel Bek & Binark, 2000). Men are generally employed in administrative parts of media companies and the division of labour is formed according to the gender roles. Although the number of women working in media has started to increase after 1980's, only one of five workers is women. They also assert that the circumstances under which women work are more challenging since companies are operated according to patriarchal values. The authors scrutinized how media present the women under four main categories as follows: Women as a mother and a spouse (1), Women as a sex object (2), Women as the target of the violence (3), gathering different personalities of women on the basis of femininity (4). However, and the first three categories will be examined.

In the first category researchers put the emphasis on media's taking the existing values as granted without questioning, conveying and reproducing them. The most common roles given to women by man dominant society are being a **mother and a spouse**, which is a very widespread phenomena observed in almost every domain of social life. Advertisements, dramas, shows are full of examples of these "typical women". The work women do are usually cleaning, cooking and taking care of the children (Bek Gencel, Binark , 2000, p. 7). However, it is very difficult to find any illustration of unequal labour division, conflicts within the family. All the members of the family seem so happy and the agents realizing this happiness are usually women. As a result, the audience is prevented from questioning about these roles.

In sum, even if family structures change according to the social classes they belong to, in dramas and advertisements, family as an institution is praised and protected (Çelenk & Timisi, 2000, p.40).

The second title of the subject is **women as a sex object**.

Television channels need to attract as many audiences as they can in order to achieve their survival amongst other counterparts. They use some means such as making use of woman body in dramas, talk shows, quiz shows to achieve their aims. It is such a common phenomenon that most people are not disturbed by the way media uses the woman body and their sexist representations.

As John Fiske (1987) articulated in *Television Culture* the fragmentation of the female body into a fetish object is commonplace in commercials, particularly those for cosmetic products. The mobilization of masculine desire in the female viewer and the construction for her of a masculine reading position is an obvious economic strategy of the industry (Fiske, 1987).

Gencel Bek and Binark (2000) also argue that some real aims of using woman in these contents are to address the intended people -mostly women- who generally go shopping and to display the woman body to attract the audience. Another important point the authors made is that time spent for displaying the woman's "beautiful, attractive and seductive" body is longer than the time allocated for showing the

product. As Patel (1995) argues the body of a woman is constructed on the screen from the eyes of the male gaze that objectifies her as a commodity (Patel, 1995). Therefore, ironically, women are demonstrated as both the consumers of a product and the objects that advertise it.

Fiske also pointed out the representations of the female body as an object of the masculine gaze and a producer of the voyeuristic pleasure. The models decorating the prizes in game shows, or providing the “scenery” in shows are clear evidence of this pleasure. He also remarked television has a tendency to confine women to the sexuality and physical types conforming to the patriarchal sense of attractiveness. The television creates, reinforces and circulates its own perceptions, images and a fictional world which heavy viewers tends to see as real.

Apart from using the body of the woman like a commodity, media exhibit the woman depriving her of intellect and mental abilities of human beings. The commonest type of advertisement is for products to improve the sexual power of the female body - losing weight, enlarging breasts, improving skin. Women in these ads are generally discontent with their outlooks and try to feel better by using them. This leads the lack of self-esteem the patriarchal system produces in women.

Another item that the authors dwelled on is presentation of the **women as the target of the violence**. The assertion mass media has a central role in increasing the violence within the society has been discussed since the beginning of the 20th century. As Gerbner states, crime and violence also play a prominent role in TV entertainment. He adds that images of choreographed brutality at home and half a world of away drench our homes (1976, p. 340).

We can say that dramas and advertisements need violence as a constituent element. If the conflict based on violence between the characters comes to an end, the audience is no more attracted. In other words, forming an intriguing atmosphere is the key to survive for some programs.

The representation of violence on television is a very controversial issue since some researchers argue that its intensive demonstration incites the possibility of resorting to violence while some claim that it decreases the occurrence of violence as watching it causes a catharsis on the part of the audience. At the beginning, the focus of the discussion was on the feelings of the people after being exposed to the violence however after a while focus shifted from this question to another one: Do media have a fostering function on the occurrence of violence? Most of the channels utilize the same methods for broadcasting violence contents. According to Gerbner (1976) scenes of violence occur an average 3 to 5 times per hour in prime-time dramatic fiction. Gerbner states that heavy viewers have a tendency to perceive the world as a more dangerous and violent place than it is (Gerbner, 1976).. As to the object of the violence, it is very obvious that the screen is full of examples of women subjected to violence from husbands, partners etc.

As Gencil Bek and Binark states, many channels represent the news of violence, sexual harassment, rape and abuse in a way to sanitize these actions of men on the grounds that women are provocative or men are unable to control their sexual urge.

While the stories of the women subjected to violence are editorialised, the emphasis is put on their beauty, youth and their roles as a wife and a mother rather than talking about the women's identities or jobs (Gencel Bek & Binark, 2008, p. 12). It can be concluded that the identity of the woman is disregarded because of the focus on the sensational news attracting the attention of the audience more. The violence is justified by putting forward some excuses which men use for resorting to violence. Violent actions of perpetrators and the patriarchal values of the society are not questioned. Media present these events as if they were the slight conflicts within the family (Gencel Bek & Binark, 2008, p. 12). That is to say, the problems of women are conceived as individual since it occurs generally within the family. However, it does not only concern the subject of the violence but rather it is a social problem which is reinforced by the contents of the media and social norms and values. The examples of violence are so common in media that people watching it may get used to the concept of violence and view it as an ordinary issue of the daily life. As Dursun quoted from Williams especially the conclusion deduced from the critical media theories inspired by Marxist society critics was that the society fostered the violent behaviour and this behaviour is presented in the chief communication tool, television (Dursun, 2013).

In short, the roles women have in television are very correspondent to the traditional ones set by the society. Likewise, in printed press, the situation is not so different. Woman body is used in programs about fashion, beauty, kitchen products or the news including the examples of violence against women. Therefore displaying woman as an object, violence as an ordinary part of women's lives intensify the perception about the traditional roles assigned to the women in Turkish society. Dağtaş (2005) gives some illustrations about the use of woman body in tabloids. The covers of tabloids are prepared in order to attract more readers or increase the circulation. In the study some tabloids were examined such as Şamdan, Süper Galaxy. All of them used photographs of naked women.

Some of the editors of the tabloids claim that photographs of naked women give an aesthetic appearance and they use a photograph of a celebrity about whom news are made continuously to appeal the men.

After stating the ways woman body is used in advertisements, dramas, the reasons of this situation should be considered. There lies a chief reason of this vigorous effort of the television: Money. The only source of income of the television is advertisements. The fees of advertisements are decided by the ratings. Television channels have to appeal more audience to have higher ratings. This means addressing to low and middle class of the society. As television channels are conscious of the people's choices, they form their broadcast schedule and choose the presenters accordingly. Since the low and middle class people are more adhered to the traditional values, channels prefer to hire women based on the gender roles to which these people attribute meaning. It leads the reinforcement and continuity of the gender roles because of the means televisions apply.

The Employment of Women as Workforce in Mass Media

When magazines, newspapers, radios and television are probed, the analogy between the traditional roles in society and the representation of women is so apparent. Similarly, employment of women is in the similar manner which serves to reinforce

the gender roles. To put it clearly, women are usually employed to present news, programs about the lives of celebrities, cooking, fashion or dating programs in other words less serious issues of life. Nevertheless, men generally are the producers and presenters of discussion programs, quiz shows, columnists of political and historical magazines. According to the results of a study performed by Global Media Monitoring Project, %93 of the producers and the presenters of the news programs about politics and governmental issues were men while the proportion of the women employees constituted only %7 of the workforce in 1995 (Gencil Bek and Binark, 2008, p. 9).

The International Women's Media Foundation carried out a study about the Status of Women in the News Media between 2008 and 2010. The IWMF believes that a free flow of information is an essential ingredient of open and democratic societies and there can be no full freedom of the press until women have an equal voice in the news-gathering and news dissemination processes (Byerly, 2011, p .7).

The IWMF Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media aims to submit robust data on gender positions in news organizations around the world. The institution put the emphasis on questions as follows:

- What is the role of women in determining and shaping the news agenda?
- Who decides how many stories are by women and represent women as pivotal subjects in news?
- Are media companies currently organized to promote gender equity within their organizational structures or to take women's voices into consideration as well as men's perspectives in coverage?

The findings of the report, conducted over a two-year period, offer an overall picture to date of women's status globally in news media ownership, publishing, reporting, editing, broadcast production and other media jobs. More than 150 researchers interviewed executives at more than 500 companies in 59 nations using a 12-page questionnaire. Both face-to-face and online survey methods were used. The results suggest that men occupy the vast majority of the management jobs and news-gathering positions in most nations. Another important finding is that 73% of the top management jobs are occupied by men. However, among senior professionals, women are nearing parity with 41% of the newsgathering, editing and writing jobs (Byerly, 2011, p. 9). A similar finding comes from a research run by Turkish Statistical Institute in 2005. According to the General Directorate On The Status Of Women (2008), the top positions such as editor-in-chief, editorial directors, and managing directors were mostly held by men and the number of women who worked in other positions was also less than the men. It can be concluded that if the position is higher or requires a high level of education, companies hire men more than the women.

An Analysis about Women Employment in Turkish Television Channels

In this title, some graphics about the social roles of women, their employment rates or numbers in media, the programs women watch most will be given.

In 2005 Global Media Monitoring Project carried out a study which analysed 13.000 news on television, radio and newspapers about how often women and men are presented. The results demonstrated that women were presented with a ratio of %21. While they were shown in television and newspapers with the percentages of %22 and %21 respectively, only %17 of the workers in radio stations were women (Gencil Bek and Binark, 2008, p. 8). Since television is a highly visual medium of communication and a very suitable source of representing the body of a woman, it can attract a lot of audiences with the help of this feature.

Another study was performed by Turkish Statistical Institute in Turkey in 2007 and the participants were women. They were asked what they thought about how media present the women and categorized the subjects about women into seven groups. The subjects were as follows: Woman as a mother, woman as a sexual object, woman as a spouse, successful woman, and woman subjected to violence, woman with problems, no idea.

%40 of the women reported that women were represented as mother, %19.9 as a sexual object, %10 as a spouse, %8.9 as successful, %0.8 object of the violence, %0.3 as problematic, %19.9 reported that they had no idea. What is so gripping is that in an age which violence can be seen in real life and media almost every day, only %0.8 of the participants remarked that women were represented as the subject of the violence. It may be because some women take the violence for granted and conceive it as an ordinary part of their lives.

Another study by Turkish Statistical Institute (2008) investigated the qualities and genders of the workers in some commercial channels. The annual number of the workers on average in all types of broadcast were 14.849, 9851 of which were men and 4999 of workers were women. In executives positions men outnumbered women in all types of broadcasts. The number of women and men were successively 3594 and 2120

In this study ten channels were examined. They are ATV, Fox TV, Haber Türk, Kanal 7, Kanal D, Samanyolu TV, Show TV, Star TV, TRT 1, TV 8, which have the highest rating among the others. In total there were 147 programs (different genres) and information about 83 presenters could be found. The programs were analyzed under 9 main categories with some subcategories, too. The categories are as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newscast <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. News 2. Sport 3. Weather
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows/Games <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quiz Shows 2. Talent Shows 3. Dating Games 4. Decoration Shows 5. Cooking Shows
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion/Opinion Programs 2. Documentary Programs 3. Health Programs

1. Kids Programs
2. Cooking Programs
3. Magazine Show
4. Music Programs

The Analysis of the Graphics

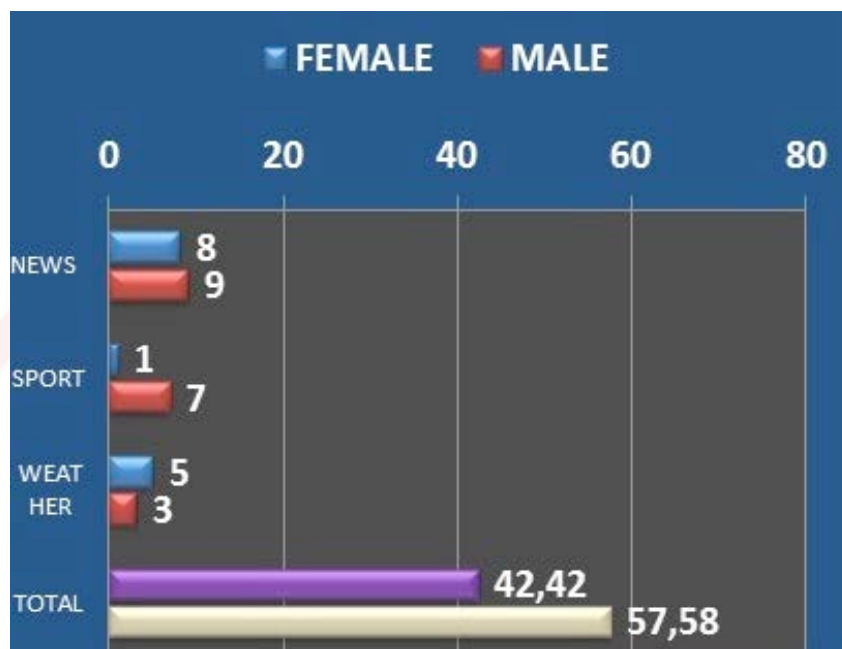


Figure 1: Category of News, Sport and Weather

In the category of news, men are in the first place. While 9 of the presenters are men, 8 of them are women. In this category the rates of men and women are close to each other. It can be stated that commercial channels prefer women for the presentation of news or the features of gender are taken into consideration.

There is a meaningful difference between the numbers of men (7) and women (1) in the category of sport news. It is generally thought that sport press is a man dominant field. The perception that the sport is for men and their entertainment affected the preferences of the producers while employing the newscasters.

When all categories are evaluated, the dominance of men is very clear even not an overwhelming one. News programs are the serious part of the daily life and the fact that men generally occupy these positions partly reinforce the idea that men should deal with serious matters.

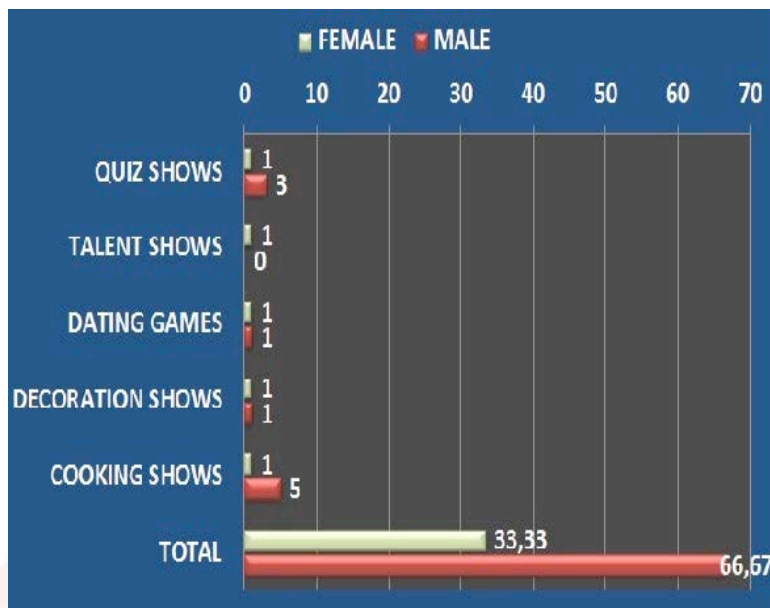


Figure 2: Category of Show and Game Programs

There are 15 presenters in this category. 5 (% 33,33) of 15 presenters are men while the rest 10 (%66,67) are women. When the subcategories are examined, the unequal division that is shaped by the gender roles is very obvious. To illustrate, the category of quiz shows demonstrates the dominance of men (3 men and 1 woman). In his book *Television Culture* Fiske(1978), states that the ambiance of the quiz shows is similar to the one at school. He argues that men are chosen for these kinds of programs on purpose because they are seen as the authority figure (Fiske, 1987).

In cooking show category, the choices for presenters are affected by the perception that gender roles created. There are 6 presenters, 5 (% 83,33) of which are women. It reinforces and reproduces the idea that domestic works are the chief responsibility of women within the society. This is also supported with the commercials in which women are usually in the kitchen.

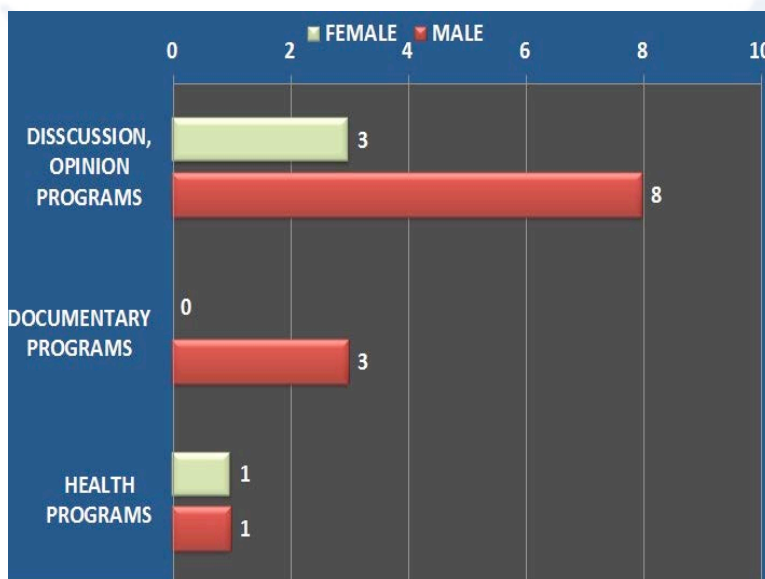


Figure 3: Category of Health, Documentary and Discussion/Opinion Programs

The dominance of men is very remarkable in this category. The programs belonging to this category have 16 presenters in total. While 12 (% 75) of all presenters are men, only four (% 25) of them are women. It can be stated that women are not included in the programs that are perceived as “serious” or “difficult to understand” by evaluating the results of this graphic.

The overwhelming majority of men in the categories of discussion, opinion programs and documentaries reinforce the perception that men should deal with serious issues in life. Women generally are excluded from these kinds of jobs.

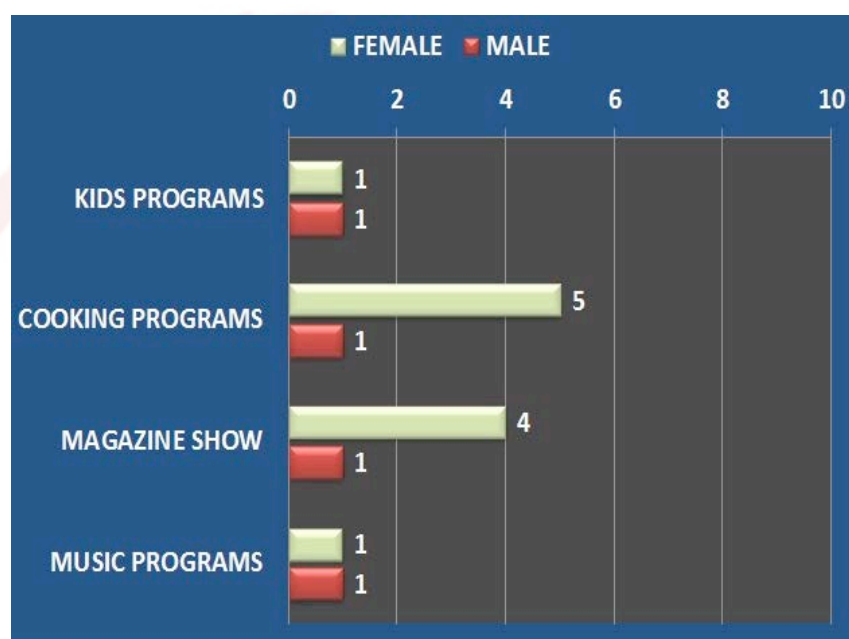


Figure 4: Category of Music, Magazine, Cooking, Kids Programs

Entertainment programs are divided into four subcategories with 15 presenters. 11 of the presenters (% 73,33) are women while only 4 (% 26,67) men are employed. Likewise, women are generally employed to work in magazine shows (4 women and 1 man). In cooking shows presenters are mostly women since it is perceived as the women’s responsibility in most culture.

Conclusion

In this study, the focus is on the reflections of gender roles and gender discrimination in television. Television channels may reinforce the existing ethnic, religious and gender discrimination. Their only income source is advertisements and they try to address as many people as they can to increase their income. The rate of lower and middle class is generally higher than the upper class in most societies and Turkey is one of these countries. As commercial channels try to address these people, they shape their content according to the meaning to which the audience attribute meaning. In other words, the channels produce, reproduce and reinforce the gender roles consciously. The results of the study are in line with the thoughts expressed above.

When the graphics are scrutinized, it is very clear that men are employed for the programs based on management, politics, economics which are fields that men should be dealing with while women are the presenters of the dating programs, cooking shows etc. Moreover, it is very plausible to state that the physical features of the women is a crucial factor for the program producers. The fact that the winners of the beauty contests were hired as the newscasters in Turkey in 1990s is the clear evidence and result of this perception.

Television prepares and circulates some content which make use of woman body and strengthens the gender discrimination within the society. To say it more specifically, not only the meanings attributed to gender roles but also the wrongly patterned social norms and values are reinforced by the television and other mass media tools with the policies and methods they utilize.

The logo for iafor (International Association for Cultural and Media Studies) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping circular arcs. The outer arc is a light red color, and the inner arc is a light blue color, matching the text. The arcs are not complete circles, but rather thick, curved lines that frame the central text.

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