



School of Advanced Social Studies

“Book of Abstracts”

Slovenian Social Science Conference 2021

“Digital Society and Sustainability”

Organizing institutions:

- Slovenian National Committee of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)
- School of Advanced Social Studies / Fakulteta za uporabne družbene študije v Novi Gorici
- International Sociological Association: Junior Sociologists Network
- Slovenian Social Science Association

November 11 - 13, 2021, Slovenia

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Slovenian National Committee of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Program (MOST),

and

School of Advanced Social Studies, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

in cooperation with

Slovenian Social Science Association and ISA Junior Sociologists Network

13TH SLOVENIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE CONFERENCE

“Digital Society and Sustainability”

Scope of the Conference

Addressing the issues of sustainable development in the context of technological advancements seems to be more important than ever. The recent outbreak of the coronavirus has enormously underscored some severe weaknesses of the global social system, revealing contested and incongruent processes of modernisation. On the one hand, we can observe global economic flows bounded to the ideology praising continuous growth and atomised consumers, which has devastating impacts on the natural environment and social interactions. On the other, we still face the dominance of national authorities preserving their interests despite challenges whose consequences reach far beyond national borders.

Social and environmental challenges are inextricably intertwined with technological ones. The immense expansion of information, communication and transport technologies has fused the physical, digital and biological worlds. Digitalisation and automatization - based on big data, artificial intelligence, internet of things - have permeated all aspects of society. One can observe exponential technological revolutions, including the rise intelligent processes, integrated reality, new energy matrix, digital governance, bioprogramming and neurogamification – referring to industry and economic development, political actions and governance, cultural encounters or everyday practices of human beings. Technology provides ground-breaking opportunities for development, improve the quality of life, health care, business infrastructure, ease the working conditions, encourage learning and creativity, improve trust towards decision-making institutions, connect people through the means of communication and transport - and encourage synergies between all that listed. However, it also poses severe threats for human society. When it is exploited for purely profit and power-seeking endeavours, it contributes to the existing deterioration of the natural environment and causing ecological disasters. It also deepens the exclusion of population who cannot afford those technologies or lack the skills required to use them, it leads to losing jobs, digital divide, digital illiteracy – and thus providing grounds for exclusivist, narrow-minded thinking among individuals and groups.

There is a mutual dialectical influence between technology and society on which the conference focuses; while digitalisation is causing a great impact on human interactions, cognition, organisations, and institutions – its emergent settings influence back upon the development and implementation of technological innovation within the society

Within the Conference we will deal with these challenges observing them in the interplay among structure, culture and individuals opening a variety of burning issues to be explored. Based on this, our conference shall primarily but not exclusively focus on:

- a) Techno-social challenges for sustainable development: in terms of dehumanisation, alienation and anomie, social and political instability, fragmentation and polarisation, excessive manipulation, surveillance and repression, deepening inequality and exclusion, accelerating environmental degradation and pollution.
- b) Democratic governance and sustainable steering: in terms of the governance as politics (expression of different interests, political competition and relations between political actors) as well as to the governance as public policy (creation and implementation of different public policies). Governance as a key social actor in providing a proper normative and regulatory settings enabling not only technological but also sustainable dimensions of society to flourish
- c) Organisational structures and processes that encourage technological and social innovations: in terms of companies, NGOs, media, academic institutions etc., which have to enable effective responses to excessive individualisation and the technology related risks. There is a challenge of adapting the organisational processes to the current social and economic problems by creating new jobs, personal wealth, and/or contributing to solidarity
- d) The impacts that digitalisation on individuals: in terms of its affects on individuals' interactions, cognition, attitudes, values, identities, creativity, productivity. There is also a role of digital literacy, learning and reflexivity for individuals' agency in responsible behaviour, which one should find important.

The Agenda

Thursday, 11 November

The activities from 9:00-17:00 are related to Connecting Europe for environmental sustainability and hosted by Jean Monnet Chair European Transnational Governance and Sustainable Development

09:00 – 09:30 Welcome address and Introductory presentation MATEJ MAKAROVIČ

09:30 – 10:30 Keynote speech with discussion

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Igor Perko, University of Maribor, Slovenia

10:30 – 11:00 Coffe Break

11:00 – 12:30 Dimensions of environmental sustainability MATEJ MAKAROVIČ

Andreas Metzner-Szigeth, *Exploring Distinct Sustainable Development Strategies*

C. C. Akshay, *Going Green in India: Placing the Centrality of Dalits in Environmentalism*

Tea Golob and Matej Makarovič, *Sustainable development of Slovenia through morphogenetic cycles*

Tamara Besednjak Valič, *Becoming a part of the regional innovation system: A study of cultural and creative sectors of two Slovenian municipalities.*

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break

14:00 – 15:30 Connecting environmental initiatives MATEJ MAKAROVIČ

Chinasa Emelda Nnanyelugo, Uzoamaka Blessing Onyeke and Izuchukwu John Ewulu *Dehumanization and environmental degradation: A Techno-Social challenge and the narrative of Bob Marley's musical track "Natural Mystic" the case for developmental sustainability*

Eduardo Erazo Acosta, *The power of the ancestral philosophy of Alli kawsay (Buen Vivir) in the indigenous movements of Colombia - Ecuador vs. the exclusion by the big mining development, contribution to the Rights of Mother Nature from the global south.*

Erika Džajić Uršič, Igor Jelen, *Towards Industrial Districts to strengthen Industrial Symbiotic Networks in FVG, Italy*

15:30 – 15:14 Coffee Break

15:45 – 17:00 Learning and teaching about the EU issues and environmental sustainability: exchange of experiences (parallel activity)

15:45 – 17:15 Media transformations in the digital society MATEJA REK

Tope Shola Akinyetun, *Social Media, Political Efficacy and Political Participation in Nigeria*

Dhirendra Kumar Sahoo *Mapping Digital Technology and Social Media: The Impact of the ICTs on Youth in Odisha, India.*

Suzana Žilič Fišer, Peter Čakš, *Organizational challenges in media institutions in digital society*

Sabina Mešić, *Social inequality and cultural narratives of media education*

17:15 – 17:30 Coffee Break

17:30 – 19:00 Media and (dis)information in the digital society SUZANA ŽILIČ FIŠER

Mateja Rek, *Challenges of tackling disinformation and fake news in the EU*

Marina Nikolaevna Makarova, *"Bulling Russia is a new sport": conspiracy theories in Russian public media discourse (2020-2021)*

Tamara Besednjak Valič, Borut Rončević and Matevž Tomšič, *Media pluralism and political control over media: The case of Slovenia*

Maruša Gorišek, *The role of science in risk societies - Listening to the experts in the flood of disciplines*

The Agenda

Friday, 12 November

The activities from 9:00-14:00 are related to Sustainable development and social innovations in Europe and hosted by Jean Monnet Module Sustain4EU

**9:00 – 10:30 Introductory presentation and keynote speech with discussion on Sustainable development and WISEs in Slovenia and Europe MATEJ MAKAROVIČ
Dr. Dražen Simleša, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Croatia**

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30 Sustainable development and social innovations in Europe JANJA MIKULAN

Maria Skivko, *Social entrepreneurship and digital technologies on the way to sustainable development*

Romina Gurashi, Ilaria Iannuzzi, Melissa Sessa, *Social Sustainability in Times of Emergency. What Future?*

Tea Golob, Matej Makarovič and Matevž Tomšič, *Effective and democratic governance as the condition of digital social innovations in Europe*

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break / Parallel activity: Students section

14:00 – 15:30 Crises and social integration: macro and micro TAMARA BESEDNJAK

Janja Mikulan, *Crisis mapping for more inclusive humanitarian information management in the ICT era*

Tatiana Karabchuk, Aizhan Shomotova, *Digitalization, Social Capital and Happiness Sustainability across the Globe*

Ananda Rao Kuriti, *Networked Individualism-Technological divide and Paradigm shift of Social relations in India: A Sociological Analysis*

Sara Sharifi Yazdi, *Understanding the life experience of middle class married women betrayal*

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee Break

15:45 – 17:15 Social divisions and exclusion JANJA MIKULAN

Deepika Anshu Bara, Pramil Panda, Avinash Ranjan, *Is technology a solution to socio-economic problems? Understanding the issues and problems faced by the tribal communities in adjusting towards a new socio-economic situation of digitalization and cashless transactions in rural Jharkhand, India.*

Swapnil Singh, *Assessing the impact of Digital Divide on Indian Society: A study of social exclusion*

Debabrata Baral, *Digitisation of Indian Society and Covid : Mapping Digital Inclusion*

Koyal Verma, *Digital Society and Refugees in India: Exploring Challenges to Sustainable Development (excused)*

17:15 – 17:30 Coffee Break

17:30 – 19:00 Health and well-being in a digital society URŠKA FRIC

Mirna Macur, *The impact of digitalisation on Slovenian primary school students in 8th grade*

Fatjona Haka, *Working with shame and guilt: New counselors' experiences in the Albanian culture*

Okan Baldil, *Quickie Health: An Accelerated and Commodified Health Communication Trend*

Sandeep Kaur, *Internet Usage and Adolescents' Happiness: A Review*

The Agenda

Friday, 13 November

9:00 – 10:30 Participation in a digital society MATEVŽ TOMŠIČ Dr. Dražen Simleša, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Croatia

Suchet Kumar, Kiran Gupta, *Digital Societies: A Sociological Study of Online Teaching during Covid Pandemic*
Alfiya K Jose, Suhash Bhattacharjee, *Pandemic and the Digital Turn in Education: Gaze from the Periphery- Comparative Study of SC/ST/OBC Students from the Indian States of Kerala and Tripura (excused)*

Antoaneta Getova, Elena Stoykova, Eleonora Mileva, Boryana Angelova-Igova, *Did the Pandemic Permanently Digitalize the Higher Education: the Attitudes of Students and Lecturers in Bulgarian Universities*

Masoud Zamanimoghadam, *Digitalization of Education in Iran: a narrative of academic environment after prevalence of the COVID-19*

Svitlana Buko, *Experiential learning in virtual intercultural teams: case of Austrian-Slovenian cross-border COIL laboratory*

Svitlana Buko, *Sustainable solutions for digital classrooms: experiential project-based learning on the Slovenian-Italian border*

12:30-12:45 Concluding Remarks MATEJ MAKAROVIĆ

Publication of the papers: Full papers based on the conference presentations submitted before December 14, 2021 (i.e. no more than one month after the conference) of acceptable quality will be published in an edited book or in an edited volume of an international scientific journal Research in Social Change – RSC (based on the topic and the author's preferences). RSC is an international, peer-reviewed journal published by Sciendo that welcomes contributions for the 2021 volume. Interested conference participants can submit the prepared articles even before the conference following the instructions on the official RSC website. The accepted, peer-reviewed, papers will be published free of charge.

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Andreas Metzner-Szigeth:

Exploring Distinct Sustainable Development Strategies

Abstract

The implementation of sustainable development in practice takes place under highly diverse conditions of targeting-conflicts about priorities, utilization competences about resources as well as divergent interests and contrasting visions of how “our common future” should look like. Facing “great challenges” of humankind therefore means tailoring well-designed interventions in the ongoing dynamics of existing patterns: in communicative culture as well as in material culture, in the organizational sphere as well as in the technological sphere. But how to do so?

Three transformational strategies that are well known in sustainability science, science-technology-studies and systemic design are “efficiency”, “sufficiency” and “consistency”. They are driven by contrasting rationalities, respond to different groundings and favour distinct instruments. They are supported by different arguments and seem to be excluding each other – a trait as well suggested in the corresponding semantics of “strong” and “weak” sustainability. We can understand efficiency, sufficiency and consistency as strategies that are competing for attention on the public agenda for being accepted and having the chance to become converted into practice. But how to combine these strategies with effective principles of design such as to enable far reaching transformations in material culture and social life?

Besides of focusing on the advantages of a “balanced approach” in theoretical reasoning there is need to initiate and realize further empirical research about concrete applications of these strategies, “best practices” and what could be learned from failures. Moreover, there should be tackled their unintended consequences, probable rebound effects and, finally, possibilities to deploy them in smart combinations together with accompanying measures. But how to elaborate some comparative research design that is able to address all these issues effectively?

C. C. Akshay:

Going Green in India: Placing the Centrality of Dalits in Environmentalism

Abstract

As a work of review based on secondary literature, this paper focuses on Environmentalism in India and the role of Dalits in the process. India is in the ambitious pursuit of becoming a global leader in renewable energy production and fight against climate change. Policy directives by international bodies have driven sustainable development goals in India for the past two to three decades. Environmental degradation has been acknowledged as a real problem and efforts to curb climate change has been initiated at several quarters. Environmental action in India and its political discourse can be comprehensively understood by looking closely at the social composition of the Indian society. India as a society can be understood on the lines of caste; caste being the social indicator that explains all socio-political negotiations in the Indian society.

In India, Dalits have been the historically excluded group, still remaining as one of the less privileged in the Indian society. In the process of environmentalism, the intellectual scholarship and the political leadership has often blinded the contribution of Dalits. The sociological relevance of Dalits, to whom natural resources are also a part of their livelihood and sustenance, has been rarely acknowledged in the realm of environmental action. It is also to be noted how environmental degradation is unequally distributed. Social groups in the upper strata of the Indian society are immune to environmental degradation and other hazardous occurrences. Dalits on the other hand face the wrath of climate change and other environmental hazards and this in turn poses a greater danger to their lives as compared to any other social groups in India.

This paper argues that it is imperative to position the role of Dalits at the heart of environmental governance and mitigation of climate change. The traditional knowledge of the Dalit community on land use, natural resources and adverse environmental effects are integral to environmental action. This paper also argues that environmentalism from the perspective of Dalits remain largely an unexplored area of scholarship which requires attention.

Matej Makarovič and Tea Golob:

Sustainable development of Slovenia through morphogenetic cycles

Abstract

This paper addresses Slovenia as a case of a post-communist country in terms of its sustainable development. It deploys an in-depth historical analysis and extensive empirical data while exploring Slovenian society through the analytical lens of morphostatic/morphogenetic approach (Archer 2017). The focus is on (1) the country's structural and cultural settings in each selected period in order to explore whether there has been a mutual reinforcement of the levels of both, contributing to the sustainable development; (2) ways in which agents respond to such changes reinforcing or changing the structural settings. The selection of quantitative structural indicators of sustainable development is based on the indicators of sustainable development that have a direct reference to the Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations 2030 and also adopted by the current Strategy of Development of Slovenia. The findings show that in terms of contributing to sustainable development, the presence of morphogenesis in the selected cycles turns out to be rather limited, and there is a severe lack of political reflexivity (cf. Al-Amoudi 2017) among actors.

Tamara Besednjak Valič:

Becoming a part of the regional innovation system: A study of cultural and creative sectors of two Slovenian municipalities.

Abstract

The article addresses the position and the structure of the cultural and creative industries in the two town municipalities – Nova Gorica and Maribor. It focuses on an in-depth overview of the role of the sector contribution towards the innovative ecosystems of each of the municipalities. By deploying qualitative research methods (via focus groups), we come to a tentative conclusion the CCIs can play an essential role in enhancing the innovation potential of the urban areas of Nova Gorica and Maribor.

Keywords: cultural and creative industries, innovation ecosystems, Nova Gorica, Maribor, qualitative research

Chinasa Emelda Nnanyelugo, Uzoamaka Blessing Onyeke and Izuchukwu John Ewulu:

Dehumanization and environmental degradation: A Techno-Social challenge and the narrative of Bob Marley's musical track "Natural Mystic" the case for developmental sustainability

Abstract

Reports of the rate and ways lives are lost and the events surrounding these ugly situations connote and attribute to the way our environment retaliates to its ill-treatment. The dehumanization seen everywhere and in every country has done so much damage to the development of the environment and the world at large which indicate the numerous and uncontrolled loss of lives globally. This has also brought the world to a relatively standstill. That notwithstanding, the challenges associated with the techno-social events in our day to day activities has but compounded the situation a whole lot. This paper attempts to ascertain these challenges and how it contributes to the environmental degradation. It also investigate the reasons why and how the environment revolts and reacts as a result of its ill-treatment which indicates and calls for a sustainable development, through the narrative of Bob Marley's musical lyrical track "natural mystic". This paper explored historical and descriptive methods using content analytical tools for collecting and analyzing data with emphasis to how this lyrical illustration provide answers and possible solutions to the problem under study. It also provides requisite information for a clearer understanding of how our environment reacts to its degradation and the effect of dehumanization that is geared as a result of the techno-social events and innovations. This is for a possible and healthy sustainable development.

Eduardo Erazo Acosta:

The power of the ancestral philosophy of Alli kawsay (Buen Vivir) in the indigenous movements of Colombia - Ecuador vs. the exclusion by the big mining development, contribution to the Rights of Mother Nature from the global south

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to present the urgency of listening to indigenous epistemologies of Sumak Kawsay (in kichwa language: Buen vivir-Good Living) and also to accompany the care/defense of the biodiversity-rich indigenous territories of the Andean region. As a research question: How is the anthropocene affecting the indigenous territories and with it the threats of the epistemologies of the Sumak Kawsay/Buen vivir?

This ethnographic research has been carried in the last 7 years, in Republics of Colombia and Ecuador, in Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca CRIC, and The Indigenous Confederation of Ecuador CONAIE. Theoretical references: epistemology of indigenous communities, indigenous intellectuals.

The anthropocene affects considerably the species of flora and fauna, the glaciers, water reserves, páramos understood as places where the water is born for the species. With it the territories Pan Amazonas region of native communities are strongly affected in their cosmovision to know.

Due to its high impact in high mountain areas, climate change affects the melting of glaciers, strong droughts, seasonal changes for food production, water shortages and with this the displacement of animals and indigenous people and with it affects their traditions and cosmovisions due to geographical relocation and spatial - socio-cultural changes.

Ethnographic work is used: interviews, participant observation, and documentary analysis. Key to comment how from the epistemologies, their spirituality's, indigenous cosmovision, the elders (grandparents and grandmothers) announce that if there is no respect for the species on earth comes catastrophe, which from modern science is already evident.

Results:

This is considered from the Decolonial theory as an alternative to development or alternative development, based on the epistemological basis of the indigenous movement, the basis of current governments/states. Without a doubt the Sumak Kawsay is difficult to implement or live in praxis in the midst of individualistic societies with accelerated urban growth or in societies structured in fossil fuels, in addition to the radical reactionary anti-movement indigenous right that watches over environmental care.

The Sumak Kawsay is part of the alternatives to the development taken care of from the indigenous cosmovision the dimensions: cosmovision, solidary economies, own right, own health, own education as alternatives with strong spiritual base of respect to the mother earth. The Sumak Kawsay as an epistemology of respect for life, is linked to »The Rights of Nature« already included in articles 70 to 74 of the Political Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador in 2008. In the midst of the great destruction by mining and resource extraction at a global level, indigenous communities are more affected because it is precisely in territories//species where there is mineral wealth that great mining increases, putting at greater risk the animal and plant species that live in indigenous territories, as well as the ancestral knowledge/indigenous worldview is threatened. In this way, when indigenous communities defend Mother Nature (Pachamama) politically, they also take care of the biological chain in terms of wealth and biodiversity or geostrategic areas, life reserves at a global level.

Erika Džajić Uršič and Igor Jelen:

Towards Industrial Districts to strengthen Industrial Symbiotic Networks in FVG, Italy

Abstract

This article is focused on the dissemination of the approach called Industrial Symbiosis (IS) in the northeast of Italy, in the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) with the aim to study the possible Industrial Symbiosis and their Networks (ISNs). These social considerations, i.e., social forces, represent a strong element of this research. The proposed description urges us to draw up scenarios, combining properties and features from different motivational value dimensions: efficiency, resilience, cooperation and proximity in the region. The existing case of IS – Industrial Area Ponte Rosso in the Province of Pordenone serve to analyse in order to characterize the various synergy networks and to study factors that may inhibit or drive the creation and development of ISNs. The main objective of this article is to contribute to raising awareness of mutual collaboration in already existing Industrial Districts (ID) and networking with the influence of social fields in FVG; nevertheless, this study can present suggestions to add value to the region and increase the number of (existing) synergies in FVG which is closest Italian region to the Slovenian border, so important, because of the mutual economic, cultural and social benefits for both countries. Hence, this article takes into consideration the common IS components, i.e., elements from organizations, economics, environment, technology and society in FVG. We set the IS and their networks understanding close to the geographic system dynamics approach present in FVG - industrial groups called Industrial Districts (ID). This allows us the identification of complex dependence relationships along, with the exchanges in the industrial network.

Tope Shola Akinyetun:

Social Media, Political Efficacy and Political Participation in Nigeria

Abstract

The role of social media in influencing political thinking, perception, and participation is becoming increasingly important, especially given the volume of research the topic has attracted. This article presents findings on social media, political efficacy, and political participation in Nigeria. The objective is to evaluate the relationship between social media and political efficacy; social media and political participation; political efficacy and political participation in Nigeria. To this end, the study adopted a web survey design to sample participants across the country using links distributed through Facebook and Twitter, which with the adoption of snowball sampling, gave the total ($N = 3,407$) respondents. The results of the descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient yield evidence that the majority of social media users in Nigeria are male, young, educated, low-income earners, and largely unemployed. It concludes that social media positively correlates with political efficacy and political participation, except that political efficacy (less social media) does not necessarily influence political participation.

Dhirendra Kumar Sahoo:

Mapping Digital Technology and Social Media: The Impact of the ICTs on Youth in Odisha, India

Abstract

Digital technologies are now an integral feature of society in ways that would have been hard to imagine even a few years previously. Innovation in science and technology is transforming the world into the digital era. As a result, knowledge-based societies are evolving and disseminating information everywhere. Today in the twenty-first century digital technology has changed our lifestyle and played an important role in contemporary society. Digital technology and social media have significantly influenced youths in the last decade; it is also observed that smartphones and social media have been transforming the socio-cultural life and technological landscape in everyday life. Therefore, this paper sheds light on a sociological model of understanding of social appropriation of technology. It explores how digital technology, the internet, and social media play a vital role in mediating, facilitating, and better-serving youth.

The present paper prospect how information and communication technology (ICT) and digital media are being used by Odisha youth. In addition, the research paper also discovers the role of digital media in bringing changes in everyday life and transformed the culture, social life, technological landscape, and other diverse aspects of the network society.

The paper's objective is to understand the reason behind youth preferences to digital technology and their approach to smartphones, the way they use it in everyday life, and examine how social media influences human relationships both in personal and public life. The study is basically followed by both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Interview scheduled and focused group discussion method is used for investigation, a purposive sample of 120 youths is taken for study in the area of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.

ICTs create a fundamental change in all aspects of our lives, including knowledge dissemination, social interaction, economic and business practices, political engagement, media, education, health, leisure, and entertainment. The study reveals that ICTs play a significant role in youths' life and fostering sustainable development by creating information-rich and information-poor societies and supporting livelihoods. But the differential impact of ICTs, especially the digital divide, i.e., challenging what is taken for granted and exposing power differentials, injustices, and inequalities.

Suzana Žilič Fišer and Peter Čakš:

Organizational challenges in media institutions in digital society

Abstract

Keywords: digital journalism, radio, local news, local media, organisation

Media organisations with its activities and in terms of organisational structures reflect the societal changes. Accordingly, media have to adapt organisational processes to the current audience demands and to enable effective processes to individualisation in society. We cannot separate journalism from technologies and deny the relationship between innovations and journalism (Vobič 2011) as media content production has always been based on the technology which enables its creativity and the potential to be shared among public. Critical junctures for accelerated implementation of new production practices could therefore either emerging rise of new technologies (Jenkins 2006; Humphreys 2016) or crisis situations as the latest Covid-19 pandemic. No media can avoid those adoptions, ranging from traditional to digital-only and from global news mastodons to local community media (Bolter et. al 2000; Stephens 2007). This paper focuses on digital journalistic practices of gathering, processing, and publishing local news from a perspective of traditional media – local radio.

As a part of the media environment, where online and social media news are becoming the most important sources of news in some audience groups, traditional media still holds the role of the most reliable source of news (Pew Research Center 2019; EBU 2020; Newman et. al, 2020). Radio is on the first position among all of them playing a significant role in informing audiences (Wu 2017) and maintaining credible sources of news (Starkey 2017: 556). Those positions and roles have been challenged by new digital media, which have undoubtedly weakened the traditional media in their agenda-setting power and re-defined the professional approaches to news production. Moreover, the traditional media were challenged even more by Covid-19 through overflow of incoming information and unprecedented need for constant news flow (De Conick et. al 2020).

Through its role local media and journalism has been a part of several studies (Žilič Fišer and Medina 2011; Nielsen 2015; Hess and Waller 2017; Rao 2020; Mathisen 2021) as local media serves local democracy (Tiffen et. al 2014) and public debate (Ali 2017) as well as bringing news from micro societies where people live and work. Not immune to global media production changes (Deuze 2007; Humphreys 2016; Weaver et. al, 2016; Rimscha et. al, 2018) local media have always been challenged in adopting new production practices (Cottle 1999; Musburger 2013; Wheatley 2019) and they have even been more provoked in the times of Covid-19 (Mihelj et. al 2021) pandemic as they were often first reliable source for local communities as well as their voice. The paper will critically analyse whether interactive online technologies can help create media organisations to remain accountable to its public when following the economic rationalities of capitalism.

This article explores the changes as well as differences and similarities in digital journalism news production practices during Covid-19 pandemic at local radio stations of different backgrounds (commercial, public service and community owned) in Slovenia. We will perform our study using the well-proven qua-

litative method for detecting journalistic practices - semi-structured in-depth interviews method (Krieken and Sanders 2017; Rimscha et. al 2018) on a representative sample of news editors. We will gain data about changing workflow, working conditions and journalistic approaches to local news in digital space, as well as how innovative they are in disseminating local news in digital formats. Therefore, we will carefully observe the processes of local radio in reflexing the surrounding environment on digital platforms, as the role of local information cannot be overlooked in recent pandemic. Accordingly, we will try to critically analyse the adopted changes in organisational process and its influence on media organisations as important institutions in democratic societies.

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Sabina Mešić:

Media literacy and active citizenship in the EU

Abstract

The study Social inequality and cultural narratives of media education is a scientific paper, which will offer new knowledge on the phenomena of the correlation of social inequality to media education, and the cultural narratives that are hidden within the stories of media education at home and in school in the digital era. Competencies such as the right usage of digital media, which includes critical analysis and understanding of media messages, and timely reaction to a constantly changing digital environment are indispensable for children and youngsters, due to the growing utilization of digital ways of communication. Due to fast-paced changes in the digital environment, we often question how to form education processes that would enable us to construct good media habits, values and professional competencies, related to digital media.

Social inequality, and consequently social class, is an underlined part of the theoretical framework because it creates the link between social class affiliation and narratives of media education. Hence, the main research question is: How social class affiliation relates to the narrative of media education in children? In this study, we investigate the said correlation between social class affiliation, their narratives and media literacy, causation of social affiliation and media education. Researchers in the field of media education are aware that circumstances influence the acquisition of a certain level of media literacy, therefore we do not claim that a low or a high social class affiliation directly relates to the former or latter level of media literacy. In this paper, we investigate personal narratives supported by grounded theory and the theory of intersectionality. These are stories within the context, social background, and profession of parents and their relation to media education, as well as narratives of educators and children, which offer different perspectives on media education. In the methodological framework of the paper, participants form focus groups and in-depth individual interviews are conducted.

Mateja Rek:

Challenges of tackling disinformation and fake news in the EU

Abstract

The exposure of citizens to large scale disinformation, including misleading or outright false information, is a major challenge for contemporary societies. Disinformation erodes trust in institutions and in digital and traditional media and harms our democracies by hampering the ability of citizens to take informed decisions. It can polarise debates, create or deepen tensions in society and undermine electoral systems, and have a wider impact on European security. It impairs freedom of opinion and expression.

The presentation will address conditions, states and consequences of communication processes in the era of post-truth, constant change, complexity, uncertainty, individualisation and globalisation. The focus will be on individual and societal ability to participate in contemporary digitally mediated communication processes and build resilience towards its negative effects.

Actions to tackle the spread and impact of online disinformation in the EU will be discussed. We argue that current efforts to develop the cognitive, emotional, and social competences of people needed to navigate digital media reality, with core competences being the ability to use, the ability to analyse, evaluate and reflect on the media messages, and the ability to create and focus on creative problem solving, may not be enough for individuals to filter the malicious information themselves. It is essential to continue motivating civic organisations and the media industry to increase activities providing online transparency and protecting citizens from disinformation. Online platforms, advertisers and the media industry have a crucial role to play in amplifying, targeting, and spreading disinformation messages of malicious actors and their cooperation with professional independent fact-checkers and researchers can detect and flag disinformation and make fact-checkers content more visible to the audiences. Their services should be easy to use in order not to exclude large parts of the population that do not have the knowledge, skills, or time to participate in the quest for the truth in digital messages.

Marina Nikolaevna Makarova:

"Bulling Russia is a new sport": conspiracy theories in Russian public media discourse (2020-2021)

Abstract

The conspiracy theories are often presented as the instruments of populist ideologies, especially due to reinforcing the “us” versus “them” dichotomy. There are many discussions about the populist features of Russian public political discourse in Putin’s era. In comparison with other populist movements, Russian populist ideology based mostly not on Manichean worldview but on anti-West narratives. It means that Western countries (previously US), international organizations, and media are demonstrated as “dangerous others” and constitute a threat to national sovereignty and stability. The aim of this paper is to present how conspiracy theories work to express Russian authority’s position in public discourse during the last two years. The content analysis and critical discourse analysis were used for examining 121 Russian political leaders and pro-Kremlin public intellectuals’ speeches and expressions presented in Russian media during 2020-2021. The main research question was: What types of conspiracy worldviews demonstrate the “positive self-presentation and the negative presentation of others”?

The “others” are presented as sources of threat, the most popular of which is “other [unfriendly] countries”, “the USA”, and “West”. The sorts of threat are provocations, interfering in domestic politics, “threat to values”, Russophobia, or military threats. The legitimization of threats is based on the following narratives:

- The “strong Russia”, with great territory, and with ‘traditional values’ that haunts foreign opponents “just because our country exists”.
- Revisionist analogies (‘topoi of history’) with historical cases of threatening Russia, especially when Russia was a winner.
- “Who is talking”: associations with other countries’ negative experiences, e.g. color revolutions that is often used as reaction on the similar accusations.
- The “prevention of threat” that means declaration of possible provocations from “Western partners”, e.g. discrediting Russian COVID-19 vaccines.

“Normalization of external treatments” (“Russia, Belarus should get used to living under external threat”) is often used to justify Russian isolation, anti-democracy laws, and retaliatory external threats. As the main populist tool, conspiracy theories include ‘topoi of savior’, in which Russia is presented as the “Liberty Island”, and its leader as a guardian of stability for Russia and for the rest of the world.

Tamara Besednjak Valič, Borut Rončević and Matevž Tomšič

Media pluralism and political control over media: The case of Slovenia

Abstract

Freedom and autonomy of the media are often seen as one of the key conditions for the functioning of democracy. Restricting media freedom is considered a serious breach of democratic standards. Recently, some have pointed out that this phenomenon have been happening in Slovenia as well, especially since the current government took office.

However, if we are talking about effective pressures on the media, which means restricting media freedom, they must be reflected in media coverage in a way that makes it favourable to the one who exerts pressure. To be specific: government control over the media exists when the media reports biasedly in favour of the government. Speaking about the situation in Slovenia, one has to state that the situation is considerably different than in other countries form the region (for example, Visegrad countries). Leftist parties enjoy much better connections with various strategic groups than their rightist counterparts. This applies above all financial circles, academia, judiciary – and the media, leading to its disproportionate influence and informal power within society.

On the basis of the empirical study on media messaging in the year 2020, the authors detect the profile of media messaging in Slovenia, i.e., political leanings and ideological orientations of major (web) media, with in the main intention to find out whether or not they are aligned with government's positions and advocating its policies, on the basis of which one could conclude about government control over media. Namely, they claim that in Slovenia, we are dealing more with the impression of government control over the media than about actual control, since the main media are still significantly more in favour of the leftist political option. Furthermore, perception of such political control over media is a in fact a result of weak pluralism of Slovenian media space.

Maruša Gorišek

The role of science in risk societies - Listening to the experts in the flood of disciplines

Abstract

Contemporary, risk societies are based on knowledge from at least two perspectives. On one hand, there is a growing demand for scientific expertise and on the other, there is a big necessity for enlightened citizens, especially in democratic societies (Skirbekk 2019). The covid-19 pandemic highlighted those aspects. The urgency and novelty of the situation, together with the public pressure and rigorousness of the measures, pushed towards the greater inclusion of experts in decision-making. However, there is a strong discord present between those who trust the science and those who oppose it, fuelled by conspiracy theories spreading on social media, showing negative consequences of the digitalization of society.

While we often hear that governments should listen to experts more, the relationship is not so straightforward. The complexity of contemporary societies coupled with technological and economic advancement demands the division of labour which results in the creation of specializations. No scientific discipline or expertise alone can explain or address all aspects of society. Different scientific disciplines, and also different experts, interpret the same data in different ways and observes the same problem through different theoretical perspectives. The differences between disciplines also influence whom we consider as experts (Knight 2019).

Our contribution addresses this problem while observing the covid-19 pandemic in the case of Slovenia, where not only conflicts between the experts and politics are visible, but also among different epistemic groups and scientific disciplines. The paper is based on the analysis of the minutes of the meeting of the official Slovenian covid-19 expert advisory group in the second and third wave of the pandemic, complemented by the analysis of the various secondary qualitative data, such as interviews and media reports. It focuses especially on the relationship between different experts and expert fields. The results show a strong predominance of infectiologists and experts specialized in treating diseases, as opposed to the epidemiologists and experts from other disciplines. Certain conflict between infectiologists and epidemiologists is visible, as well as between other disciplines (such as lawyers). These conflicts influence the way expertise is used in policy process and the role expertise and science have in a society. The results suggest that more interdisciplinarity and dialogue between different epistemic groups and scientific disciplines is needed. The conclusions of the analysis are further discussed in the framework of the role of meritocracy and knowledge in contemporary risk societies.

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Maria Skivko:

Social entrepreneurship and digital technologies on the way to sustainable development

Abstract

In order to encourage and develop technological and social innovations, it is relevant to create and support businesses that foster such innovations. Additionally, sustainable development requires business transformation to complement several social, economic or ecological problems. Social entrepreneurship as a type of business focuses on solving social, cultural or environmental problems and creating effective responses to such challenges. By providing new working places, offering creative solutions to everyday problems, highlighting the importance of social solidarity, social entrepreneurship contributes to sustainable development goals. In these conditions, the impact of digitalization is unavoidable: it relates technologies, consumers, and business strategies and stimulates necessary changes. This research emphasizes the use of digital technologies and applying of the principles of digital culture by social business to foster technological innovations and contribute to the realization of sustainable development goals. The examples from the Russian social entrepreneurship applying digital innovations illustrate this idea.

Romina Gurashi, Ilaria Iannuzzi, Melissa Sessa:

Social Sustainability in Times of Emergency. What Future?

Abstract

This paper aims to critically explore the various dimensions of sustainability during the covid-19 pandemic. The state of emergency has intensified and exacerbated the call for sustainable actions in terms of digitalization and green economy. In contrast to the functionalistic model hitherto adopted by society – which focuses on the integration of elements (such as inclusion, cohesion, etc.) – the solidaristic model of sustainability is currently gaining momentum. However, this model does not seem to be devoid of critical aspects. If sustainability means ensuring that future generations are able to meet their own needs without jeopardising their well-being, the current state of emergency has severely tested this goal and has provided an opportunity to critically reflect on the very premises of the current social model and on the solidarity-based model some scholars wish to implement. It is therefore important to define the sociological implications of the economic, technological and environmental aspects of sustainability. This will allow us to recognise that all three aspects have a common basis in social sustainability. In fact, it seems that it is precisely social sustainability the policy suffering the greatest setback during the pandemic. However, in order to be completely sustainable, these different dimensions must not be dissociated from each other, but rather analysed and implemented on interdependent basis.

The interdependence between the dimensions, in the end, is not just 'one' of the issues to be investigated but becomes 'the' condition for the achievement of the sustainable social model. Therefore, what are the consequences of this deficiency in theory? What are the correlations between the various forms of sustainability? What are the possible future scenarios?

Tea Golob, Matej Makarovič and Matevž Tomšič:

Effective and democratic governance as the condition of digital social innovations in Europe

Abstract

The paper explores whether and how the performance of European countries in terms of digital social innovations is conditioned by inclusive and effective governance, prevailing cultural patterns and the existing level of socio-economic development. The notion of governance is considered from the perspective of classical concept of active society as outlined by Amitai Etzioni. Cultural varieties are presented in terms of the Hofstede's six cultural dimensions and the socio-economic development is operationalised in terms of Human Development Index. The method of fuzzy set comparative analysis based on Boolean algebra is applied. It enables systematic testing of conditions on small numbers of cases and it combines the benefits of quantitative and qualitative perspective. The analysis demonstrates that inclusive and effective governance are necessary and sufficient condition for digital social innovations. This means that the existence of channels for widespread participation of the people, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, in political life, as well as effective and transparent conduct of political institutions lead to a boom of creativity and utilisation of human capital in all key areas of society. We cannot confirm any significant conditioning of digital social innovations by culture or pre-existing socio-economic development. At least in the EU context, our results provide some reasons for optimism, since the highest levels of socio-economic development are not necessary for impressive performance in terms of digital social innovation.

The interdependence between the dimensions, in the end, is not just 'one' of the issues to be investigated but becomes 'the' condition for the achievement of the sustainable social model. Therefore, what are the consequences of this deficiency in theory? What are the correlations between the various forms of sustainability? What are the possible future scenarios?

Janja Mikulan

Crisis mapping for more inclusive humanitarian information management in the ICT era

Abstract

Structural changes such as development of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) demand more inclusive, diverse and bottom-up forms of Humanitarian Information Management (HIM) and a reflection on opportunities and constraints of such changes for the humanitarian sector and involved participants. Article addresses the issue of mapping and final results enabled by ICTs and crowdsourcing that have a great potential to address two significant issues related to the management of humanitarian information. These are limited geographic information as well as limited information and knowledge about emergency relief actors in the field, and weak involvement of (local) communities and other relevant actors for crisis preparedness and response. Article presents the case study of EUROSCHA volunteers in Kenya who were aiming at crisis preparedness by increasing the level of information of local and international (humanitarian) actors through open-source tools and ICTs. EUROSCHA volunteers managed to involve different relevant actors into HIM, have increased the mapping capacities of several actors, and have designed or upgraded the open source maps of four rural areas in the mid-West part of Kenya. However the intense participant observation also exposed a need to monitor and evaluate the impacts of such maps and mitigate the challenges related to (crisis) mapping.

Tatiana Karabchuk, Aizhan Shomotova:

Digitalization, Social Capital and Happiness Sustainability across the Globe

Abstract

Previous research showed the positive impact of social capital measured as trust, social and political activism, and the frequency of communication via information channels on life satisfaction. The usage of new technologies brings changes in human communications and connections. At the same time, the recent massive digitalization of social life questions happiness sustainability. This research highlights the moderation effect of digital development at the national level on the association of social capital and subjective well-being at individual level. With the help of multilevel modeling based on the latest wave of the World Value Survey data of 2017-2020, we test how the Internet, mobile phone and social media penetration in the country moderate the link between subjective well-being of the individuals and their social capital measured as trust, confidence in institutions, social and political activism, and frequency of usage of information channels. The results demonstrated a significantly important role of the new technologies for individual happiness and life satisfaction. Thus, for example, the higher number of social media users in the country improves the membership opportunities, which positively contributes to individual happiness.

Ananda Rao Kuriti:

Networked Individualism-Technological divide and Paradigm shift of Social relations in India: A Sociological Analysis

Abstract

Social relationships are changing, and technology is a driving force in many of these changes. There are some fears that the digital technologies are killing society, but studies conducted by the Pew Internet Project show that these technologies are not isolated or isolating systems. Manuel Castells linked the rise of the Internet with a pattern of forming relationships and Barry Wellman (2006) subsequently dubbed as ‘networked individualism’ suggests a historical shift in emphasis from long-term loyalties to family, friends and place-based communities to more fluid and dispersed social networks. This implied automatic opposition between loyalties of a more relationally embedded nature and a particular form of ‘individualism’ is an old manoeuvre which is open to challenge theoretically and empirically. In India, the impact of culture and technology on children’s relationship with their families are changing. Both are contributed to a growing divide between the traditional roles and at the same time, blurring the same lines between them. This divide has grown due to the increased use of technology among children in several ways. The main objective of this paper is to examine how the technology in India enables the individuals in changing of their relations with their family and other members by applying the theory of networked individualism.

Sara Sharifi Yazdi:

Understanding the life experience of middle class married women betrayal

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is finding out about the reasons and the ways of middle class married women betrayal via their living world. This is a qualitative research so deep semi-structured, episodic interview techniques and observation technique were used to collect data meanwhile the basic theory method was used to analyze the data. The sample in this research includes 34 women with emotional and sexual relationship out of marriage. The results indicate that some set of conditions created the first spark of change in their opinions. These changes are empowered through both experience of tolerance and exclusion so strategies such as distance, compulsive tolerance, counteract, etc. have been used for reacting by the people in this study; besides some of the other consequences of betrayal which can be named are lack of comfort, feeling of deprivation, violence, labeling, guilty feelings of grief, and so on.

Deepika Anshu Bara, Pramil Panda, Avinash Ranjan:

Is technology a solution to socio-economic problems? Understanding the issues and problems faced by the tribal communities in adjusting towards a new socio-economic situation of digitalization and cashless transactions in rural Jharkhand, India.

Abstract

With the current trend of connecting the world through digitalization, Indian government aligning itself in the digitalization process initiated the flagship program of making India digital by enabling inclusive growth and development in the areas of banking, trade and commerce, rural development, poverty eradication, skill training, and job opportunities. However, such initiatives do yield little results when the majority of population still lacks basic access to modern education and technology. Half of India's population still lives in poverty, eighty percent of the population work in the informal economy and many villages are still deprived of mobile connectivity, so the buzzwords like less- cash, cashless economy and digital economy do not produce any impact when the society is marginalized in terms of access to proper communication system.

Therefore, the objectives of the study engage with: 1) the issues affecting the economic transition from cash to cashless economy; 2) whether the tribal population is able to adopt the very idea of technology-mediated economic and commercial transactions? and 3) why the gap between technology and society is still at large in the Indian context? Considering the three different phases enclosed in this study, the study employs the Political Economy of Science and Technology (PEST) perspective that deals with the governance of Science and Technology that leads to control of the economy and society. The study critically reflects on the issues and problems faced by the tribal communities in adjusting towards a new socio-economic situation of digitalizing the society and economic transactions. Digitalizing India foregrounds web of relations and social networks through which each and every citizen is governed by the modern-day political system of a nation-state. On the one hand, the tribal communities still depend on the primary mode of production – tribal and peasant economy – for their livelihood. On the other hand, in the name of decentralized development, the Government of India (GoI) fosters the digitalization of the economy and society. Therefore, the crux of the study is to find out the factors impeding the cashless transactions among the tribal communities. The study is an important contribution to a scholarly understanding of socio-economic inequality in multicultural societies because it unpacks how the trajectories of marginalization are shaped by the broader socioeconomic-historical context of production, distribution, consumption, and minority-majority relations in the societies; hence experiences of disadvantage are qualitatively different across the tribal groups.

Swapnil Singh:

Assessing the impact of Digital Divide on Indian Society: A study of social exclusion

Abstract

The notion of digital divide gained prominence in 1990s. The characterization of the idea of digital divide has evolved with time and is currently recognized as a “lack of knowledge, access or infrastructure”. It can be comprehended as a barrier for the general masses particularly in developing countries. ICTs (Information and Communication Technology) now occupy a significant role in our lives (especially in Covid-19 times). Digital literacy and successful use of internet technology have become essential in today's world. India is known for its social diversity, and the concept of social inclusion is enshrined in the Indian Constitution. However, some groups and categories of people have historically been excluded and continue to be excluded today. There are varied parameters for such exclusion (caste, gender/transgender, tribe, disabled). The study focuses on the assessment of the impact of the digital divide on Indian society, specifically on the phenomenon of social exclusion because of the digitalization of almost all aspects of our lives. The research gap observed is “the digital divide may have serious consequences for future growth because it restricts social mobility, creates impediments, and exacerbates social isolation for disadvantaged groups”. Further, the study intends to investigate some specific aspects and practices of the digital divide in contemporary Indian society, as well as the emergence of digital discrimination because of gaps in knowledge, access, and skillsets required to bridge them. A mixed-method approach to research methodology is used, with qualitative data gathered using an interview schedule for the Delphi study and quantitative data gathered using a well-structured survey questionnaire for the cross-sectional study. To obtain an adequate sample size, respondents are chosen using simple random sampling technique of probability sampling. For qualitative data, thematic analysis is presented using Nvivo software. Statistical techniques such as reliability, factor analysis, T-test, Anova, and Correlation-Regression are used to present quantitative data analysis. The study's expected outcome will be to provide a vigilant roadmap for policymakers and public institutions to strengthen nationhood among the masses while promoting social inclusion. India has been divided since the beginning of society, which has continued to grow for various reasons. Modern Indian society should strive for inclusion, and there should be no discrimination in terms of digital accessibility, which could paralyze the developing nation.

Debabrata Baral:

Digitisation of Indian Society and Covid : Mapping Digital Inclusion

Abstract

The Covid Pandemic impacted and changed the ways of Governance and administration in India. The sharing of information e.g. preventive measures, availability of hospital beds, vaccination, etc all were done through digital platforms. It is in this contexts, this paper is structured around the following themes. First, to map the ways through which the healthcare system adapted digitalization during the pandemic. Second, to outline the ways, Indian administration adopted and engaged with the digital platforms to handle covid. Third, to evaluate digital inclusion and the impacts of digitization during the pandemic in India. This paper is based on both primary and secondary data. Purposive sampling methods were used to colled primary data, using a semi-structured interview. A review of Government records is undertaken for secondary data.

Koyal Verma:

Digital Society and Refugees in India: Exploring Challenges to Sustainable Development

Abstract

The Coronavirus ushered in a sudden transformation and an unanticipated turn towards a digital society. This sudden shift undoubtedly gave rise to a set of new challenges in the age of information and technology. For example, the impact of coronavirus on the marginalized communities especially women and children belonging to refugee families and asylum-seekers aggravated their social, political and economic marginalization, exclusion and inequality in India. Not to mention their over-crowded living conditions, low standard of housing, over-exposure to coronavirus, lack of health care, and education system, intensified their everyday struggles and experiences. It is in this context, that first, this paper outlines how the coronavirus impacted the refugees and asylum-seekers in India. It emphasizes on the everyday lived experiences of the refugees and asylum seekers. Second, having faced war, conflict, violence, bloodshed, death and trauma, this paper analyses the increased challenges faced by the refugees in their integration process in India. Third, it outlines the response of the state. This paper analyses the techno-social challenges faced by the refugees to understand sustainable development goals in terms of issues of de-humanization, alienation, anomie, social and political instability faced by refugees. The lack of access to education for instance, which largely shifted to remote services, impacted the children of refugee families given their living conditions and inability to access resources. This paper identifies these challenges of the marginalized communities in the context of digital society and sustainability.

Mirna Macur:

The impact of digitalisation on Slovenian primary school students in 8th grade

Abstract

Society is rapidly moving towards a digitalised future, encouraged by national (Digital Slovenia 2020, Digital Slovenia 2030) and European guidelines and strategies. Use of computers, tablets and smart phones is not reserved only for adults: adolescents use them extensively for school work and leisure activities. Although internet use has many advantages, some students use it extensively in a way that harms them. Problematic internet use scale used in a nationally representative sample of Slovenian 8th graders showed that one quarter of them were problematic internet users, not being able to control their time on the internet. Comparison of problematic and non-problematic internet users in 8th grade showed different pattern of spending their free time: screen time prevailed in the first group. Unfortunately problematic internet users also showed statistically significant lower levels of self-control in all 7 dimensions of self-control scale (Kim & Kim, 2015) compared to non-problematic internet users: they wholeheartedly take part in exciting things even if they have to take an examination the next day; they abandon a task once it becomes hard and laborious; they are apt to enjoy risky activities; they enjoy teasing and harassing other people; they feel like they are a ticking time bomb; they lose their temper whenever they get angry; they habitually don't do their homework.

Evidence from abroad show that problematic internet users among students are less successful at school. Career prospects of problematic internet users are smaller where discipline and self-control is expected. Adolescents need help in recognising harmful effects of modern digital technologies and in learning to control their time spent on the internet.

Fatjona Haka:

Working with shame and guilt: New counselors' experiences in the Albanian culture

Abstract

This is a qualitative research that used the interpretative phenomenological method to explore shame and guilt experiences of Albanian new counselors in the therapy hour. Those having less than five years of experience in this field were considered as new counselors. Participants, six female counselors were introduced to an in depth semi structured interview which they answered individually to avoid unintentional shaming, or embarrassment. The main goal of the interview agenda was to explore counselors' understanding and reaction towards theirs and clients shame and guilt in the therapy hour.

Interview transcripts were analyzed one by one and then integrated with each other. Their interrelationship was processed in detail before establishing their connection.

Five themes emerged from the analysis: shamelessness, anger & aggression, standards & norms, self esteem & self confidence, pride.

The findings are consistent with previous researches conducted by the author. They reflect the insufficient knowledge and professional training of the participants and the urgent need to improve their knowledge and skills in the specific area of self conscious emotions. To conclude, specific recommendations were offered by the author to improve their knowledge and practical skills .

Okan Baldil:

Quickie Health: An Accelerated and Commodified Health Communication Trend

Abstract

The accelerated digitalization and proliferation of information, communication, commodities, money and services are actually dependent on the acceleration of global social system. This new order entails arranging and configuring oneself in harmony with the other ideologies, organizations and communities more frequently. This organizational and ideological configuration produces an accelerated and intensified search for health solutions, and for rapidly-corresponding health and consumption systems. As a result of the extreme manipulation, commodification and exploitation of the health management through digital technologies, the health-relevant interactions, perception, decision-making and behaviors of individuals have changed dramatically. A morality-based self-regulation and behavior conditioning has been offered as the ultimate solution since 1990s, more intensely since the invention of the Internet. This exploitative and commodified system of health management has been defined in this study as “Quickie Health”. This system was introduced toward the end of the 20th century through such health communication channels, wellness and quick tips cultures. At present, this one-size-fits-all health approach without doctors, hospitals and prescriptions is embedded in health systems of Turkey and Portugal.

The concept of medicalized quickie health, created by the accelerated consumer and information society is discussed in this study as a phenomenon and concept that deserves to be examined with its negative consequences. It will be elaborated with theoretical discussions and references, and in terms of political, economic, emotional and communicative aspects. To find some answers concerning these consequences, a relevant research question was asked: “What kind of impacts do quickie health have on health perception?”. This question draws the limits of argumentation and the relevant-implications to be investigated. An online survey study with 400 respondents from Turkey and Portugal was conducted to whether this concept and its implications are perceived by health-literate respondents as theorized in this paper. According to the results obtained, the majority of respondents often hear about quick tips, the most basic product of quickie health understanding, especially from their social circles. The arguments are supported with evidence from such sources as internet digital media, conventional media, social media, and public space.

Sandeep Kaur:

Internet Usage and Adolescents' Happiness: A Review

Abstract

Adolescence, which is often designated as a period of ‘stress and strain’, is associated with a number of unsolicited challenges. Covid-19 pandemic added fuel to the fire. This situation has a significant effect on the internet usage pattern of adolescents who started spending an increasing amount of time online owing to the demand of the situation. This situation not only impacted the mental health of adolescents rather it has taken a toll on their happiness as well. This paper reviewed the literature on the relationship between internet usage and the happiness of adolescents and concluded that technology usage has both negative and positive effects on the happiness and psychological well-being of adolescents depending upon the purpose and time spent on its usage. Therefore, there is a need to regulate its usage to promote its positive effects and for mitigating its possible harm. Implications for supporting adolescents’ happiness in the digital age are also discussed.

Simona Kukovič:

Stay connected, maintain the distance

Abstract

The COVID-19 crisis has driven several mega-trends and transformations, and one of them is undoubtedly digitalisation. Digital government response to the COVID-19 crisis react in the short term, resolve in the medium term, and reinvent in the long term. For example information-sharing, e-participation and two-way communication through digital platforms enabled accurate reactions to the crisis; some public services, such as education and health care, shifted to a digital mode within a few weeks, while remote working was crucial for reinforcing social distancing and mitigating the economic impact of the crisis. Employing digital tools during the COVID-19 crisis offered authorities the opportunity to stay connected with citizens. This was particularly crucial for local government, which is closest level of authority to citizens, and essential for the immediate response(s) to the crisis. Local governments were increasingly mobilising digital tools that served to 1) inform and help decision-makers take and adopt appropriate action, measures and contain the pandemic, and 2) communicate transparently with citizens, building trust and helping them to go through the times of extreme uncertainty. Even before the COVID-19 crisis there was a growing tendency among local governments to use and adopt e-tools to provide and facilitate new (modern) ways of civic political action, but this pandemic has greatly accelerated this process. Evidence of this is that many local councils have moved debates to a virtual environment and/or even allow online voting, which was almost unimaginable a year and a half ago. The main purpose of this contribution is to discuss the shift towards digitalisation during the COVID-19 crisis and to present some experiences from different local governments in European countries and abroad. Moreover, we will put a special emphasis on Slovenian municipalities to find out to what extent COVID-19 crisis has enhanced local decision-making processes in a virtual environment as well as the involvement of (e)citizens.

Czarina Mdeina-Guce:

Empowered to Hope? Relational Participatory Power Relations and Civic Tech-Mediated Governance Futures

Abstract

Civic tech serves to improve the “operating system (Bouganim 2014)” of civic action and citizen empowerment, distinct from ‘gov tech’ that targets efficiency of government processes and mechanisms. Through such lens, incorporating civic tech in governance systems disrupts mainstream, usually non-digitized forms of citizen engagement in local agenda-setting and claim-making. The expansion of the ‘possible’ enables reflections for futures thinking or the articulation of civic tech-mediated alternative scenarios for governance (i.e., what futures are probable with civic tech as a foresight lens). While scenario archetypes are usually portrayed as narratives of continuation, limits, decline, or transformation (Dator’s Four Futures), this paper’s analysis of articulations of local civic tech-mediated governance scenarios in the Philippines leans toward “fractal tensions (Mische 2021)” reflecting a relational analysis of power (Selg 2016, 2018, and Selg and Ventsel 2020) in participatory settings. For some, civic tech-mediated governance futures simply follow current paths of political elite appropriation of ‘open government innovations’ to legitimize their control (the self-actionalist view of power), while others view civic tech as a capability-building input for civil society’s pool of power resources (the inter-actionalist view) with no assurance of government responsiveness or political uptake. These future visions tend to emerge from invited or constrained participatory spaces, with citizens projecting civic tech first plainly as tools relevant to address immediate political and administrative blockages in participation, followed by formulations of optimistic scenarios that are more ‘wished’ than owned. Meanwhile, in rare claimed participatory spaces, civic tech-mediated futures tend to paint creative medium-term outcomes of sustained development and deepened democracy, as local civil society organizations perceive civic tech as both site and instrument for emergent and co-constituted power (the trans-actional view). The paper underscores two implications: First, civic tech enables citizen visions of sustainable and democratized futures when it is designed and deployed to be embedded in participatory power relations and not simply as technical capacity-building interventions. Second, the articulation of civic tech-mediated governance futures could inform theories of change to improve citizen participation, not just at the structural-technical level of policy making and output legitimacy, but also for relational approaches to collective sense-making and participatory hope.

Dejan Valentinčič:

*Attracting digital nomads as a way of returning brains to the homelands:
Slovenian and comparative experiences and policies*

Abstract

Most of East and South European countries are facing serious challenges regarding emigration and brain drain in the last decade and a half. Countries are adopting different measures to slow down and reverse this trend. One of the approaches is to change the laws and introduce a status of digital nomads - giving people who can work from any part of the world via telecommunications technologies the possibility to legally live and work in a country.

Two researches are going to be presented. First is a comparative policy analysis how different European countries are addressing the issues of brain drain and try to change it into brain circulation, with an emphasis on approaches for attracting digital nomads. The second is a Slovenian national research on mitigating the consequences of brain drain and strengthening the mechanism of brain circulation. The results of two year study are going to be presented.

Levente Székely:

How to name them? Youth in the age of the digital revolution, pandemic, and climate change.

Abstract

According to the recent research findings, young people are the pioneers of the information society. The use of infocommunication technologies is the most common among young people. They use infocommunication devices intensively for work and in their free time too. Their digital involvement has certainly increased as a result of the digital education which took place under the coronavirus epidemic. The young generation has been given many names in recent years: digital natives, climate generation, coronavirus generation. In the lecture, I examine the names of these in relation to young people in Hungary.

The Hungarian Youth 2020 survey is the sixth wave of the series of research entitled Youth, begun at the turn of the millennium. In the course of the research, we interviewed 8000 young people between the age of fifteen and twenty-nine using the TAPI (Tablet Assisted Personal Interviewing) technique. The questions put to interviewees addressed a broad range of issues the age group faces. The sample of the research is representative of the Hungarian population aged between fifteen and twenty-nine in terms of region, type of settlement, age, and gender. The sample was compiled with multi-level sampling and with the method of clustered probability sampling.

Suchet Kumar, Kiran Gupta

Digital Societies: A Sociological Study of Online Teaching during Covid Pandemic

Abstract

A digital society is a progressive society that has been formed as a result of adaptation as well as integration of advanced technologies into society and culture. Emerging technologies and field responsible for developing a true digital society includes Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Information Science and Computing and other areas viz. Business Studies, Commerce and several areas of Humanities and Social science.

Digital Society deals with highly advanced telecommunications and wireless connectivity systems and solutions. Digital society mainly depends on the Digital economy which is one of the emerging concepts of economic development with proper support from digital tools and technologies and depends on information, knowledge and digital products. Digital society mainly depends on different kinds of stakeholders which include society, technologies, and content. The latest name in Digital Society includes the Internet of Things (IoT), 5G, Cloud Computing, Big Data, Human-Computer Interaction and so on. Online teaching is a characteristic of digital society. Whole educational activities from primary to a high level has been shut down during the lockdown amid the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak not only in the United Kingdom (UK) but across the globe. They successfully forced the global shutdown of educational institutions has resulted in the migration to online classes. In other words, online education has forced a pedagogical shift from traditional face to face classrooms to online platforms. A study by Lokanath et. al.,(2020) citing Lederman (2020) states that due to the COVID-19 crisis teachers and students both find themselves in the situation where they felt compelled to embrace the digital academic experience as the new norms. The online teaching method has led to disturbance to pedagogical roles of the educators and their personal lives. The paper discusses the challenges associated with online teaching for student recruitment, market sustainability, and academic labour market, and local economies.

Alfiya K Jose, Suhash Bhattacharjee:

Pandemic and the Digital Turn in Education: Gaze from the Periphery- Comparative Study of SC/ST/OBC Students from the Indian States of Kerala and Tripura

Abstract

India witnessed radical structural changes in the late 19th and early 21st century with the rapid growth and expansion of internet technology. Ruling regimes have fervently attempted to establish a socially and culturally sustainable nation driven by the internet through initiatives such as Aadhaar and other Digital India projects. However, the majority of these initiatives gradually turned out to be mechanisms of power hegemony and surveillance which posed a threat to the democratic potential of these projects. The digitization of governance and everyday social life at large widened the historically existing structural inequalities based on caste, gender, religion, economy, language, region, etc. and it structured new spheres of social exclusion and marginalization. Given this context, the study focuses on the impact of digitalization of education in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic among students who belong to the marginalized communities of Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, and Other Backward Class. The constant attempts by margins to access the avenues of the internet for education got subdued as the uneven hierarchies in the social system extended to the digital classrooms. Instead of enhancing the goal of an inclusive and sustainable digital space for education, the government attempts to transform offline classes into online platforms amplified the existing digital exclusion and social divisions. This proposed study is based on a comparative analysis of students from Aralam Farm, a tribal re-settlement area in Kerala and the North Tripura district of Tripura. Both Kerala (South India) and Tripura (North- East) have high literacy rates and stand higher in other Social and Human development indicators. This study would make an attempt to explore the current initiatives of these States in providing equal opportunities, affordance and affordability, accessibility, and sustainable digital surroundings of education to the students from peripheries. Relying on ethnographic methods including digital ethnography, our study would try to analyze the marginalized student's perception of online education and also would attempt to contextualize it into the larger realm of marginalization in the digital era in the Indian and South Asian contexts.

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Antoaneta Getova, Elena Stoykova, Eleonora Mileva, Boryana Angelova-Igova:

Did the Pandemic Permanently Digitalize the Higher Education: the Attitudes of Students and Lecturers in Bulgarian Universities

Abstract

The pandemic of COVID-19 had a great impact on the national educational systems in many countries, including Bulgaria. In the last three semesters the educational process was held mostly online in the majority of the Bulgarian universities with very rare exceptions. The switch to online learning in Bulgaria was made very fast and practically with no real previous experience or preparation which raised the question if it was effective enough. On the other hand, while considered as temporary, the online learning continued three semesters with the possibility to continue even further which leads to the dilemma if the pandemic irreversibly changed the higher education to more digitalized, advanced and practically new approach of learning or it just brought a new and very heavy crisis in the educational system and most importantly: what are the perceptions of the participants in the educational process about all these unexpected changes?

The paper presents the results of an empirical online survey of the attitudes of lecturers and students towards the effects of online education, its advantages and disadvantages and also its main problems. The sample consists of 253 students and 77 lecturers of different Bulgarian universities. The survey was made in 2021 and is a continuation of a pilot survey made during the first lockdown in Bulgaria in May 2020 by the same team.

Masoud Zamanimoghadam:

Digitalization of Education in Iran: a narrative of academic environment after prevalence of the COVID-19

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic in Iran, like in other parts of the world, has affected the educational and academic environment. Educational and academic classrooms have been disbanded and online classrooms have expanded rapidly. In the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, Iran faced difficulties and obstacles in holding online meetings and courses, including a lack of the necessary technical infrastructure and, and inadequate academic skills and knowledge in using online education. However, the need for digitalization of education forced the Iranian educational and academic environment to adapt to online education. The aim of this paper is to evaluate online education in academic experiences in Iran. Therefore, as an academic, I studied my experiences in online education and learning in Iran using a narrative research approach and through self-reflection in my personal narrative. The analysis of the obtained narrative shows that the digitalization of education and university activities provides an opportunity for easier and less costly access for students, researchers, and academics for education and learning. The digitalization of the educational and academic environment reduces the oligarchy of those university professors who dominate the academic environment and, opens the education field for the activity and agency of marginalized academics and scholars. Before the spread of online education in Iran, holding online classes, courses, meetings, and workshops was almost impossible for marginalized academics and scholars. It can be concluded that the increase in the digitalization of education in recent years in Iran has provided the ground for the democratization of education.

Svitlana Buko:

Experiential learning in virtual intercultural teams: case of Austrian-Slovenian cross-border COIL laboratory

Abstract

This project focuses on the alternative instructional design and delivery in the virtual space. Masters-level course “Economic and Business Culture” with a group of adult learners experienced conceptually different methods of teaching and learning, offered as a sustainable solution for the digital classroom. Discovery-based teaching and learning model aimed to “re-discover” business and economic cultures of different countries via practical cases and examples, starting with the border region (Slovenia-Italy-Austria). Course was re-designed to promote experiential project-based virtual team learning among adult students, based on the principals of the andragogy; engage learners and bring on board their prior intercultural experiences – living and working in the borderlands of Italian Gorizia and Slovenian Nova Gorica. Reflective part of the learning was rooted in the comparative mindset – ability to compare/contrast economic and business cultures, analyze similarities and differences, applying intercultural theories and tools. Learning framework encompassed several aspects: Knowledge - Attitudes - Skills - Tools. Key deliverable of the course was a joint analytical presentation with intercultural business solutions. New program evaluation results show high impact and sustainability of new digital solutions to pedagogy. Qualitative data from reflective surveys of students demonstrate a very high level of satisfaction with the new formats of the learning. In the feedback surveys the learners stressed the importance and value of the real-life business cases, direct application of the intercultural theory to practice and interactive engaging learning modules with external guest speakers. High level of retention, performance and motivation demonstrated that course redesign is a sustainable salutation for the digital classrooms.

Svitlana Buko:

Sustainable solutions for digital classrooms: experiential project-based learning on the Slovenian-Italian border

Abstract

This project focuses on the alternative instructional design and delivery in the virtual space. During the pandemic online fall/spring 2021 masters-level course “Economic and Business Culture” with a group of adult learners experienced conceptually different methods of teaching and learning, with the goal to offer a sustainable solution for the digital classroom. Discovery-based teaching and learning model aimed to “re-discover” business and economic cultures of different countries via practical cases and examples, starting with the border region (Slovenia-Italy-Austria). Course was re-designed to promote experiential project-based virtual team learning among adult students, based on the principals of the andragogy; engage learners and bring on board their prior intercultural experiences – living and working in the borderlands of Italian Gorizia and Slovenian Nova Gorica. Reflective part of the learning was rooted in the comparative mindset, namely the ability to compare/contrast economic and business cultures, analyze similarities and differences, applying intercultural theories and tools. Learning framework encompassed several aspects: Knowledge - Attitudes - Skills - Tools. Key deliverable of the course was a joint analytical virtual presentation with intercultural business solutions. New program evaluation results showed high impact and sustainability of new digital solutions to pedagogy. Qualitative data from reflective surveys of students demonstrate a very high level of satisfaction with the new formats of learning in the digital classroom. In the feedback surveys the learners stressed the importance and value of the real-life business cases, direct application of the intercultural theory to practice and interactive project-based engaging learning modules with external guest speakers in the virtual classroom. Program evaluation quantitative data demonstrates high level of retention, performance and motivation, confirming that course redesign is a sustainable salutation for the digital classrooms.