Youngsters and their mediated bedrooms:
A socio-demographic analysis of differences in ownership and use of new information technologies

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http://www.mict.be
MICT = Research Group for Media & ICT

- Affiliated to Ghent University, department of Communication Studies
- Both fundamental & applied (policy) research in the field of (new) media & ICT
- Spearheads of our research
  - ICT & Society
  - Media production & distribution
  - Media use & experience
  - Profiling & targeting
  - Gaming
- Part of the IBBT
IBBT = Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology

• Founded in 2004 by the Flemish government
• Mission: “development of high-competent human capital & carrying out multidisciplinary research for business and government”
• Focus on ICT & applications
• 5 Application domains
• > 600 researchers @ 6 universities
Ownership of New Information Technologies in Flanders
(Figures IBBT-iLab.o Digimeter, 2009)

- Television set: 97%
- Cell phone: 92%
- Computer: 81%
- Internet Connection: 78%
The discourse of teenagers and new information technologies

• Optimistic undertone:

  • *Digital natives* (Prensky, 2001)
  • *Net generation* (Leung, 2003; 2004)
  • *Playstation generation* (Broos & Roe, 2006)
Some observations about youth and new media

- New media commonplace in young people’s daily lives, but there are some cracks in the story:
  - Differences in skills & critical attitudes
  - Still gender and SES differences
  - Also: relevant to consider context
    - private vs public spaces
    - ‘bedroom culture’ (Bovill & Livingstone, 2001)
Some observations about youth and new media (2)

- Challenges of the emerging participatory media culture (see Jenkins et al., 2006)
  - ‘participation gap’
  - ‘transparency problem’
  - ‘ethics challenge’

--> cf. debate on ‘new media literacy’

--> role of parental mediation
Theoretical framework: the domestication approach

Silverstone & Haddon (1996)

--> 3 dimensions in the domestication process

• Commodification
• Appropriation
• Converstion
Our study

Need for representative figures on appropriation and context...

Methodology:

• Quantitative classroom survey in Flemish Secondary Schools
  • October-December 2009
  • N = 1725

• Follow-up interviews at the homes of the interviewees
  • February-March 2010
  • N = 44
Results

Media-rich bedroom
- 38% of the sample
- + p having media technologies in the **private bedroom**
- + p watching TV, gaming, Web surfing

Media-rich environment
- 32% of the sample
- + p having media technologies at **shared spaces**
- + p watching TV, gaming, Web surfing

Limited media environment
- 29% of the sample
- - p having game console, mobile devices, television, pc
- Subtle differences in usage
Results (2)

Media-rich bedroom
- 67% male vs. 33% female
- Education type:
  - ASO: 31%
  - TSO: 39%
  - BSO: 30%

Media-rich environment
- 55% male vs. 45% female
- Education type:
  - ASO: 54%
  - TSO: 29%
  - BSO: 16%

Limited media environment
- 75% female vs. 25% female
- Education type:
  - ASO: 43%
  - TSO: 29%
  - BSO: 28%
Results (3)

Media-rich bedroom
- Mail: 75%
- Chat: 86%
- Blogs: 40%
- Homework: 56%
- Information search: 74%
- Music: 89%
- Radio: 22%
- Podcast: 26%
- Video: 85%

Media-rich environment
- Mail: 72%
- Chat: 80%
- Blogs: 35%
- Homework: 63%
- Information search: 77%
- Music: 82%
- Radio: 18%
- Podcast: 17%
- Video: 76%

Limited media environment
- Mail: 77%
- Chat: 81%
- Blogs: 37%
- Homework: 68%
- Information search: 75%
- Music: 85%
- Radio: 16%
- Podcast: 16%
- Video: 67%
Results

Participation inequalities: consuming vs prosuming

- Teenagers with media-rich bedroom more likely to ‘prosume’?
Results
Online risk awareness: personal information put on SNS profile

- Not much parental mediation (though gender differences)
- Differences between three groups
Concluding remarks

• Socio-demographic and socio-economic variables still relevant, but not sufficient to explain digital inequalities among young people.

• Role of context of media use: new inequalities seem to emerge between those who have new media at their individual and private disposal, and those with lesser opportunities to participate.
  • Teenagers with a media-rich bedroom are using the Internet more frequently and in more advanced ways.
  • They tend to use new media more actively and creatively and seem to spend more time on social networking sites.
  • But they also seem to be more likely to show risky online behavior and a lack of privacy awareness.
Thank you for listening...

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