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## THE ROLE OF NEW MEDIA IN ENHANCING ADOLESCENTS' DIGITAL LIFE QUALITY

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**Abstract.** *The study aims to investigate the effect of new media on the quality of digital life for a sample of adolescents based on the descriptive analytical approach. The teenage period is one of the most dangerous stages of human life, and the era of technology and the presence of new digital media posed a great danger to the life of this group, which requires attention to study the effects of these phenomena. The study uses two questionnaires; the first is about using new media, and the second is about the quality of digital life. Participants (N=192) are adolescents residing in UAE who study in secondary schools and range in age from 13 to 16. The results show the significant role of the new media in enhancing adolescents' Digital Quality of Life. Findings also indicate statistically significant differences between respondents' interests when using new media applications in favor of those with scientific interests; they score the highest mean 4,62. Also, there are statistically significant differences between the respondents when choosing their favorite means of communication; the differences are in favor of Facebook by an arithmetic mean of 4,5, then Tik Tok with 4,39, followed by Instagram with 4,26, then Twitter — 3,88, and finally Telegram — 3,79. The study recommendations refer to the importance of the new media today as one of the main factors that must be considered, especially when dealing with adolescents and their perceptions.*

**Keywords:** *new media, digital life quality, adolescents, connections, social networking sites.*

## Introduction

Due to technological innovations, the media industry is undergoing some of the most fundamental changes nowadays. These innovations include digital programs, social networking sites, and reporting news using drones. Sharing via social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, is one of the most critical aspects of information technology.

Digital technology developments in media have enabled countries to overcome the time barrier and enter the software industry world. In Singapore, digital communication technology has become one of the essential primary sources of national income. It has contributed to achieving economic and social development. Also, India has ranked 3rd among the world's countries in the software industry. Its scientists have contributed to the design of advanced technology in electronic computers and digital media. [1].

It quickly becomes apparent that new media is distinguished from traditional media; its digital content interacts with the recipients. This media technology has become an area of research to examine the digital society, which has become an integral part of people's lives worldwide. It has led to shifts in individuals' awareness and facilitated social interaction. [2]. The quality of digital life or digital citizenship means the presence of a secure digital society, enhancing a positive identity with meaningful digital interaction, and ensuring a positive, healthy digital environment for individuals because of their virtual world [3].

The researchers divided the quality of digital life into four axes: 1) Digital capability: It means building the individuals' abilities and enabling them to use the Internet consciously and adequately; 2) Digital behavior: It is concerned with enhancing individuals' positive digital values and behaviors; 3) Digital content: It means preparing guidelines on using positive content; 4) Digital communication: It aims to protect people from the risks of dealing with suspicious parties virtually.

Adolescence represents a significant milestone for each person. It has the greatest

impact on his life. New media has attracted adolescents, affected them through various means, and affected their life quality [4]. This concept should be addressed widely, particularly in light of the scarce research in this field.

The present research aims to determine adolescents' use of new media and its impact on the quality of their digital life. Study questions: 1) What is the extent of the adolescents' use of new media? 2) What is the impact of adolescents' use of new media on the quality of their digital life? 3) What is the effect of the adolescents' demographic variables (gender – age – specialization – favorite means of communication) on their use of new media? Study objectives: 1) Investigating the impact of new media on adolescents' digital life quality; 2) Analyzing the new media addressing adolescents with its different means to enhance the quality of their digital life; 3) Determining the characteristics of new media in the current era [5]. Study significance: 1) The theoretical significance: This study is concerned with analyzing the cultural awareness of new media and the quality of digital life for adolescents; 2) The practical significance: This study focuses on analyzing adolescents' responses about the role of new media in enhancing the quality of their digital life and how this will affect their behaviors and thinking styles in the future. It is concerned with avoiding the excessive, harmful use of new digital media. [6, p. 158].

## The theoretical study

New media or digital media is a concept produced by the modern technological revolution. Media researchers have yet to agree on a specific definition for it. This concept has arisen with the development of Internet services<sup>1</sup>. With rising internet penetration, many researchers have been interested in studying new media. They have seen it as a new type of media distinguished from the traditional one. It is characterized by immediacy and

<sup>1</sup> O'Neill B. The Influence of Social Media on the Development of Children and Young People. European Parliament: Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, 2023.

interactivity. Moreover, it can publish various contents with distinct forms achieving a great effect [7]. The new media relies mainly on the Internet. The Internet enables all media professionals to present their media products digitally. It allows them to combine text, sound, and image. It erases the borders between the recipient and the sender. Thus, digital media communication is electronic services that use modern electronic technologies resulting from integrating communication and information technology [8].

This media type is called digital media, interactive media, or hypermedia. In addition, it refers to hypertext technology, a system for linking related text documents and allowing users to browse the World Wide Web [9]. Also, the new media is called «online media» or «cyber media». Some researchers call it «info media» to describe the mating between computers and communication. This points to the emergence of a new media system that benefits from the development of information technology [10].

The new media has been linked to the information and communication technology revolution. It started with the emergence of electronic newspapers and magazines, representing a recent media phenomenon. As the advent of electronic applications and blogs increases, users have become able to print, copy, create content, and distribute it using high-tech devices or mobile phones [5]. Saxena indicated that the new media in our era had been the key driver of daily events and contributed to activating the field of humanity and civilization at all economic, social, and scientific levels [11]. Zúñiga and Chen confirmed that new media had become an integral part of citizens' life and a tool for spreading information [12]. Expanding its applications and activities has contributed to the rapid spread of digital culture. It has transformed human civilizations from large, distant continents to small towns.

Contemporary developments of new media have provided intellectual tools that can be used to achieve more effective communication and diversity of information. The sociological model of the information society has changed

the whole community constantly under the impact of daily digital communication [13]. It has been reflected in daily dealings and has become a part of our lives. The transformation of communication from analog to digital, from hierarchical to web-based, has created a new environment to share information and opinions. This environment can be called «Eco media». It has provided opportunities for the emergence of digital citizen and citizen journalism [14].

The users are no longer satisfied with traditional media products. They have become dependent on digital media news and information [15]. Today, we are experiencing an unprecedented transformation led by modern technology. We are witnessing changes in our societal perceptions, work patterns, and production inputs<sup>2</sup>. Statistics on the use of new media showed that children aged 3–4 use tablets at home (28%). They added that children aged 9–16 years old watch video clips (76%), play video games (83%), use text messages (62%), log into social networks daily (82%), and use the Internet for homework (85%) [16].

Ofcom Center conducted a study on 500 children. Its results showed that children aged 3 to 7 watch TV on the satellite device (95%) before Pandemic<sup>3</sup>. Children between 3–4 and 5–7 years old watch TV on the tablet (41% and 49% respectively). Respondents aged 3–4 and 5–7 play electronic games (40% and 66% respectively). Those aged 3–4 and 5–7 years use the tablet to access the Internet (71% and 63% respectively). Finally, children between 3–4 and 5–7 years old access YouTube to watch cartoons and favorite videos (48% and 71% consecutively).

Today, new digital media is witnessing consequent transformations and developments. These transformations have produced many new media tools, such as: 1) Electronic journalism: It is a periodic

<sup>2</sup> O'Neill B. The Influence of Social Media on the Development of Children and Young People. European Parliament: Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Ofcom. Adults Media Use and Attitudes Report. 2016 Annex. Available at: [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/research\\_publications/adults/media-lit-2016](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/research_publications/adults/media-lit-2016) (Accessed: 16 April 2025).

electronic publication about current events. It can be read through a computer via the web. It provides news, comments, articles, reports, and investigations<sup>4</sup>; 2) Digital satellite television: The Internet has changed the economic, social, and media landscape. It has become a partner in broadcasting audio-visual materials. The American «mבחgH» channel is the first to broadcast its programs on YouTube [17]; 3) Social networking sites are the most prominent types of new media. These sites enable people to make friends, create content, and share photos and files [18]; 4) Digital broadcasting: It is represented in digital satellite radio and internet radio.

Overall, new media has added value to the field of media and communication because it has the characteristics of diversity, flexibility, and interactivity. In addition, it has enabled people to express themselves freely. Thus, researchers are keen to conduct more studies in this field to determine new research and theoretical trends. The concept of the quality of digital life usually differs from one person to another. People determine their quality of life according to many standards, including income level, reaching goals, family stability, entertainment, leisure time, and physical and psychological health [19]. When defining the quality of life, two main dimensions should be viewed; the objective and the subjective. Most researchers focused on the objective dimension, which includes a set of measurable and observable indicators, such as income level, work status, and social status. However, the results of many studies have indicated that these indicators only contribute a tiny fraction of the person's quality of life [20].

The World Health Organization describes the quality of life as the individual's awareness of his situation in the cultural context to which he belongs, his expectations, values, interests, and physical and psychological health, in addition to his personality, social relationships, and personal beliefs. Thus, the

concept of quality of life is consistent with the individual's psychological life quality<sup>5</sup>. The quality of life depends on the person's realization of his life and this reflection on his lifestyle. Self-indicators play the largest role in defining the concept of life quality. So, each person has different criteria to determine the extent of his life quality. Many factors go into this process, such as experience, environment, genetic, cultural, and social aspects [21, p. 120]. As a result of the massive revolution in digital life, information technology has become the largest source of improving the quality of our lives. Hence, illiteracy is expanded to include poor access to digital tools and the inability to read and write digitally. In a 2008 American study, it was assumed that 75% of American adults constantly use the Internet to get work done.

Digital life brings comfort and saves time. Digital transformation contributes to achieving higher communication between individuals worldwide. Today, the rapid technological changes in society significantly impact individuals [22, p. 13]. Over the past 20 years, many factors led to the emergence of digital life quality, such as the development of digital technology, the growing popularity of digital applications, and the widespread use of the World Wide Web. This is followed by the penetration of mobile phones and social networking sites, achieving a significant paradigm shift in the digital world.

In order to achieve the quality of digital life under the excessive flow of information and electronic social relations, specific skills are required. It is important to prevent the negative side of digital life by avoiding digital multitasking and excessive consumption. To ensure the quality of digital life, Microsoft has taken essential steps to achieve digital literacy; it provides 6,500 computers with access to the Internet in poor countries' villages. This work requires efforts by the governments to eradicate digital illiteracy. They should partner with international companies to provide them with the required technologies [23, p. 112]. The need for a digital lifestyle has

<sup>4</sup> Newman N. Journalism, Media, and Technology Trends and Predictions. 2023. The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Available at: [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/Journalism\\_media\\_and\\_technology\\_trends\\_and\\_predictions\\_2023.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/Journalism_media_and_technology_trends_and_predictions_2023.pdf) (Accessed: 16 April 2025).

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organization. IPAQ. Quality of Life e (Versión 2.0. Español). 2012. Available at: <http://www.who.int/chp/steps/instrument/es/index/htm> (Accessed: 10 February 2024).

emerged during crises, especially the Covid-19 crisis. This crisis has highlighted the need to enhance individuals' digital life regarding remote working and distance learning. Digital life has provided opportunities for skilled people and business innovators to enrich their experiences through the Internet. Also, it has allowed employers and companies to hire the right people to improve their services [4, p. 123]. Moreover, the quality of elderly life has improved in recent years due to using information technology, smartphones, and computers. Damant et al assured that older people can increase their quality of life by using information technology, represented in e-mail, network pages, and Skype, to gain better health care, communicate with family and restore their relationships [24, p. 3].

Participants (N=192) were adolescents who studied in secondary schools and ranged in age from 13 to 16. The sample included 89 (46.4%)

males and 103 (53.6%) females: 18.2% (n = 35) were 13 years old, 25% (n = 48) were 14 years old, 27.1% (n = 52) were 15 years, and 29.7% (n = 57) were 16 years old. The majority of the respondents had a scientific specialization: 50.1% (n = 9730), 7% (n = 59) had a humanities specialization, and 18.8% (n = 36) did not specify their specialization.

The study used two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was about using new media. It included 35 items that were shortened to 22 after the arbitrators' comments. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to verify its validity, and it was 91.0. The second one was about digital life quality. It included 28 items that were shortened to 21 after the arbitrators' comments. The relationship between each statement and the total score was calculated to verify the validity of the questionnaire as follows (table 1).

Table 1

**Correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and the total score of the questionnaire on digital life quality**

Таблица 1

Коэффициенты корреляции между показателем качества цифровой жизни в отдельных ответах и общем показателе по анкете

Number	The statement correlation	The significance	Number	The statement correlation	The significance	Number	The statement correlation	The significance
1	0,87	0,05	8	0,68	0,05	15	0,51	0,05
2	0,74		9	0,69		16	0,66	
3	0,87		10	0,54		17	0,79	
4	0,68		11	0,68		18	0,90	
5	0,85		12	0,55		19	0,62	
6	0,64		13	0,74		20	0,73	
7	0,59		14	0,58		21	0,58	

Source: results of author's survey.

**Discussions and conclusions**

Regarding the study questions, the following tables show the answer to these questions (Q).

**Q1. What is the extent of the adolescents' use of new media?** Table 2 refers to the findings as follows.

The previous results show the adolescents' use of new media with regards to their

attitudes to the questionnaire statements; 68.3% fully agree, 23.6% agree, 4.8% do not know, 1.9% do not agree, and finally 1.5% do not entirely agree. The arithmetic mean of all statements is (4.35), with a standard deviation of less than one, indicating the homogeneity of the participants' responses to the questionnaire statements. The chi-square is less than 0.05 for all comments,

Table 2

The extent of adolescents' use of new media

Таблица 2

Степень использования подростками новых медиа

Number	Number of using per year	Average	Standard deviation	$\chi^2$
1	117	4,65	0,84	68,7
2	133	4,31	0,67	58,2
3	138	4,01	0,86	47,6
4	126	4,33	0,78	84,5
5	137	4,40	0,84	77,3
6	132	4,35	0,77	69,3
7	125	4,12	0,79	67,3
8	133	3,98	0,87	74,5
9	129	4,61	0,71	81,1
10	140	4,50	0,84	46,8
11	136	4,32	0,81	71,0
12	133	3,81	0,82	58,6
13	123	4,51	0,65	57,9
14	127	3,96	0,78	56,4
15	130	4,58	0,69	74,5
16	136	4,35	0,74	80,01
17	137	4,36	0,73	59,4
18	132	4,58	0,58	69,7
19	126	4,26	0,64	66,1
20	131	4,57	0,47	48,8
21	129	4,69	0,84	81,0
22	134	4,58	0,77	70,3
Total	2884	4,35	16,49	68,3

Source: results of author's survey.

referring to the respondents' agreement on the questionnaire statements.

**Q2. What is the impact of adolescents' use of new media on the quality of their digital life?** Table 3 refers to the findings as follows.

The regression results show a statistically significant effect of using new media on the quality of digital life; the correlation coefficient R is 0.55, at the significance level  $0.05 \geq \alpha$ , and  $R^2$  is 0.30. Thus, 0.30 of changes in the quality of digital life scores resulted from the change in using new media scores. Furthermore, the regression coefficient  $\beta$  is 0.78, showing that the increase by one degree in using new media

leads to an increase in the quality of digital life with a value of 0.78. In addition, the F value is 68.5 at the significance level  $0.05 \geq \alpha$ , implying a statistically significant effect of using new media on the quality of adolescents' digital life.

**Q3. What is the effect of the adolescents' demographic variables (gender – age – specialization – favorite means of communication) on their use of new media?**

Tables 4, 5 refer to the findings of the third question as follows. No significant differences exist between males and females using new media.

No statistically significant differences exist between the age groups using new media; F =

Table 3

**The impact of using new media on the respondents' digital life quality**

Таблица 3

Влияние использования новых медиа на качество цифровой жизни подростков

R	R2	Significance	β		Error
			The stable	2,1	
0,55	0,30	0,00	Digital life quality	0,78	0,01

Source: results of author's survey.

Table 4

**Test of differences between respondents in their use of new media by gender**

Таблица 4

Проверка различий между респондентами в использовании ими новых медиа по полу

Parameter	Number	Average	Standard deviation	Diapason	Significance
Gender	Male	89	4,01	388	0,078
	Female	103	4.31		

Source: results of author's survey.

Table 5

**ANOVA test of differences between respondents in their use of new media by age, specialization, and favorite means of communication**

Таблица 5

Дисперсионный анализ различий между респондентами в использовании ими новых медиа по возрасту, специализации, любимым средствам коммуникации

Parameter	Number	Average	Standard deviation	Diapason		Significance
Subparameter	Share of female	103	4.31	0.87	Outside social net Inside social net	
Age	13	35	4,01	0,68	2	387
	14	48	4,12	0,87		
	15	52	3,98	0,74		
	16	57	4,51	0,62		
Specialization	Scientific	97	4,62	0,79	2	378
	Humanitarian	59	4,09	0,80		
	Other	36	4,19	0,51		
Social net	Facebook	71	4,50	0,60	3	386
	Instagram	29	4.26	0.85		
	Tik Tok	65	4.39	0.97		
	Twitter	15	3.88	1.06		
	Telegram	12	3.79	1.21		

Source: results of author's survey.

361, a non-statistically considerable value at the significance level of 0,87. The differences are in favor of Facebook by an arithmetic

mean of 4,50, then Tik Tok (4,39), followed by Instagram (4,26), then Twitter (3,88), and finally Telegram (3,79).5]

## Results

This study examines the extent of adolescents' use of new media. Adolescents seem to spend much time using new media, particularly social networking sites, intelligent applications, and electronic blogs. In this way, adolescents have their own media tools to create content, take photographs and videos via mobile phones and distribute them worldwide. It is consistent with the previous research on using new media<sup>6</sup> [5; 9; 10]. In addition to examining the adolescents' use of new media, the study also explored the role of new media in achieving the quality of their digital life and found that their life quality is closely linked to their digital life. Therefore, they depend on new media in their affairs [6; 23].

During the Covid-19 crisis, the need has arisen to support digital life among users in general and adolescents in particular. Digital life has been the perfect solution to work and study. Regarding the study findings, the largest share of respondents in the study surveys refers to their own experience, and their practical experience among friends is that digital living improves many dimensions of their work, play, and home life. Furthermore, they pointed to profound changes for the better as the Internet revolutionized everything from the most immediate intellectual and emotional experiences to some of the most common and everyday aspects of existence.

Digital media has dramatically impacted adolescents' daily lives in how they communicate, collaborate, and work.

Increasing the use of such platforms brought various effects, most of which proved beneficial to society. It has enabled unprecedented levels of connection, community building, and social interaction, breaking down the barriers of location, time, and social context for adolescents. However, it would not be wise to continue talking about the positive aspects of digital media without touching on the negatives. Research shows that when adolescents use digital media excessively, it can negatively affect their behavioral and cognitive development as well as their physical and mental health. As a society, although digital media has connected us across borders, much attention has to be paid to its nature and content.

The results of this study recommend highlighting the following: 1) Future research needs to explore further the relationship between using new media and adolescents' mental health; 2) The importance of supporting individuals' digital life by setting the standards that regulate digital content to make optimal use of new media; 3) It is crucial to promote new media targeting adolescents and encouraging them to participate in creating meaningful content; 4) We should keep pace with technological progress and digital technology development; 5) We should observe our adolescents' and youth's behaviors toward using modern applications.

It was the author's approach developed for government policy development, the study was conducted in region of United Arab Emirates, study focuses exactly on this sample of teenagers, as well as teenagers have the strongest influence on social nets development direction.

<sup>6</sup> O'Neill B. The Influence of Social Media on the Development of Children and Young People. European Parliament: Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, 2023.

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## РОЛЬ НОВЫХ МЕДИА В ПОВЫШЕНИИ КАЧЕСТВА ЦИФРОВОЙ ЖИЗНИ ПОДРОСТКОВ

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**Аннотация.** Цель представленной работы — изучить влияние новых медиа на качество цифровой жизни подростков на основе описательно-аналитического подхода. Подростковый период — один из самых опасных этапов жизни человека, а развитие технологий и появление новых цифровых медиа представляют большую опасность для жизни этой группы населения, что требует внимательного изучения последствий влияния этих медиа. Исследование включало в себя два вопросника: в первом спрашивалось об использовании новых медиа, во втором — о качестве цифровой жизни. Участниками опроса (N=192) были подростки в возрасте от 13 до 16 лет, проживающие в Объединённых Арабских Эмиратах (ОАЭ) и обучающиеся в средней школе. Полученные результаты показывают значительную роль новых медиа в повышении качества цифровой жизни подростков. Они также указывают на статистически значимые различия в интересах респондентов при использовании новых медиа-приложений в пользу тех, кто использует научные приложения: у них самое высокое среднее значение использования — 4,62. Также наблюдаются статистически значимые различия между респондентами при выборе предпочтительных социальных сетей: в первом месте Facebook (запрещена в России, принадлежит компании Meta, признанной в России экстремистской) со средней оценкой использования в 4,5, затем идут Tik Tok с 4,39, Instagram (запрещена в России, принадлежит компании Meta, признанной в России экстремистской) с 4,26, Twitter с 3,88 и, наконец, Telegram — 3,79. В предлагаемых рекомендациях отмечается важность новых медиа сегодня как одного из основных способов распространения информации, которые нужно учитывать, особенно когда речь идёт о подростках и их представлениях, при этом подростки могут широко использовать социальные сети, официально запрещённые в конкретной стране, но популярные в других странах мира.

**Ключевые слова:** новые медиа, качество цифровой жизни, подростки, социальные связи, сайты социальных сетей.

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