Digital Competencies and Capabilities. Pre-adolescents Inside and Outside School

# Details

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## Sample

The sample for the pilot study involved 436 students from 7 junior high schools in the Rome area and 268 parents.

# Abstract

The investment on key-competences in last years was one crucial European strategy to face the new challenges of the knowledge society and of the digital convergence and to guarantee the active citizenship and social inclusion. The first answer has been given in Lisbon 2000’s, when eight main objectives have been presented; they were focused on the improvement of skills in educational paths of the main agencies (i.e. school and family). Hence, the digital competence, included in Lisbon strategies, can be interpreted in a double meaning: as basic skill (focused on the digital literacy) as soft skill (focused on the digital learning). Starting from here, this proposal will construct a theoretical description of the digital competency and its impact to socialization processes of pre-adolescents, considering the influence and the strategies applied by agencies of the social capital. This issue will be analysed through the re-reading the capabilities approach by Sen and Nussbaum (2011), according two perspectives: 1. the first is connected to the development of digital competencies during the learning process of preadolescents; 2. the second is focused on the relational and communicative styles of their socializing agencies, that influence the relationship of children with media, with social and cognitive consequences.

# Outcome

the overview outlined by the initial data appears to indicate a generation of pre-teens who, in matters of digital competencies, inhabit a dimension of technological access and critical analysis, but only as far as the most widely-used media tools, tablets and smartphones, are concerned, and through their use the pre-teens develop direct experiential knowledge and abilities. The latter, in particular, seem to be mainly of a basic level, and focus on the aesthetic and ethical characteristics of the messages exchanged and shared, while an analysis of the industrial background behind the production of digital messages still appears to be absent. The other across-the-board digital competencies, such as creative production, awareness and citizenship, seem to be underrepresented within this age group, independently of their sociocultural profile of origin, and therefore without a direct impact of their family social capital on their development. [...] Secondly, scholastic and family sociocultural profiles, starting from the range of infrastructures available (the possession of technology, or lack of it) and the cultural and media habits of adults (styles of usage with reference to diverse media devices), intervene in diversifying pre-teens’ cultural behaviour. These variables contribute to generating an intra-generational gap and diversified profiles among digital natives.
(Cortoni, 2016, pp. 181-182)