Media Competence in Spanish Secondary School Students. Assessing Instrumental and Critical Thinking Skills in Digital Contexts

# Details

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## Topics

## Sample

The sample consisted of 672 students attending secondary schools in 10 provinces in Spain. The age range of the participants in percentage terms were 14 year-old (42.56%), 15
year-old (41.35%), 16 year-old (12.03%) and 17year-old (4.06%). All students were in the fourth year of their secondary school education. Gender-wise, 50.38% were female and 49.62% male. The students were matriculated in state schools (71.58%), private state-funded schools (24.06%) and private schools (4.36%).

## Implications For Educators About

* Digital citizenship
* School innovation
* Professional development
* Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Improving digital skills through national school curriculum,

# Abstract

The ways in which young people communicate have changed in line with the impact of technologies. This change has been accompanied by growing differences between the young, and their "liquid" experience, and adults with their "solid" experience, and these shapes the state of the question that defines young people as digital natives. This work analyses Spanish adolescents' level of media competence. The sample consisted of 672 students attending secondary schools in 10 provinces in Spain. The average age of the participants was 14. The study aims to show that, although today's adolescents are described as the digital generation, and there is a widely held belief that they are digital natives, their level of media competence is low and there is need for fomenting greater literacy skills in this field. The ad hoc questionnaire yielded results that indicate an overall medium level of media competence, but a skills shortage in the dimensions relating to critical thinking, such as in reception and audience, production and programming processes, and ideology and values. The conclusions question the supposed superior competence of digital natives in media. This study underlines the need for a clear definition of the concept of media competence from a convergence perspective.

# Outcome

The authors highlight that the surveyed youth display a higher level of knowledge in terms of media languages and technology usage but are not as strong in skills linked to reception and audience and are lacking in skills in production and programming processes and dissemination, with a basic level in aspects related to ideology and values. Results also show that more than half the adolescents surveyed consider that they understand messages and can express themselves through a range of systems of representation and signification by editing and manipulating images, videos or audio with computer programs, nonetheless "their scant knowledge of the codes used to construct audio-visual messages is paradoxical, particularly considering the efforts made by authorities, administrations and government and educational institutions to develop these technical skills and their use in the classroom" (Pérez-Rodríguez et al., 2019: 43). The authors remark that, according to results, it is fundamental to strengthen those skills related to reception and audience, production and programming processes, and ideology and values. Pérez-Rodríguez et al., (2019:44) address "the need for education in media literacy from a convergence perspective that goes beyond the treatment of the impact of technology to engaging with skills that can promote understanding, critical thinking, creativity, intercultural awareness, and citizenry, as recommended UNESCO" and advice regarding the importance of strengthening literacy skills by considering the communication experiences youngsters have outside school.

[Text extracted from the original publication and adapted by the coder]