

Chapter 13

Digital Media Consumption of Children in Cinema

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ABSTRACT

Digital technology causes rapid changes and transformations in cultural spheres. The new generation consisting of children, teens, and youth is the group most affected by this process. These technological developments in culture have been reflected on cinema, and have taken its place in film scripts in the process of time. If the theme of a film is about post-2000, child characters are seen with the media like laptop, mobile phone, tablet, etc. The aim of this study is to observe the digital media consumption of the teen actors in films. The film Disconnect (2012) by Henry Alex Rubin which focuses on internet and technology use and draws attention on the communication gaps of people was observed by the use of qualitative content analysis. It is fictionalized around the themes like the communication gap among people caused by film technology, the problems that people face by the use of technology, cyber bullying, and invasion of privacy.

INTRODUCTION

Technological developments have entered in a process of rapid change starting from the 70s and especially after the 80s. This change has been one of the reasons of globalization. One of the other reasons of globalization is the demand of capitalization to open up to the world. This demand enabled capitalism to transform into a new form in the new technological process. Thus, the transition from fordist period to postfordist period in economic field and from modernist period to postmodernist period in cultural sphere which started to manifest itself in the 70s, has progressively become evident. In satellite and broadcasting fields, deregulation policies have started to be applied in several countries. From the political point of view, a more liberal political sense has started to dominate the world instead of politically polarized atmosphere of pre-80 period.

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The developments in computer technologies in the 80s brought out the internet in the second half of the 90s, those in internet brought out the social media in 2000s, and it started to spread over the world in the second half of 2000s. Especially during the late 2000s, it caused serious socio-cultural and political breakups and changes in traditional countries, and even the people having organized on social media – like the protests in Arab Spring – caused the overthrow of governments. Thus, global communication period has started, a process in which globalization has influence on people's clothes and emotions, everyone is informed about each other in the world, interrelated socio-eco-political and cultural changes are experienced has been entered.

In this process, the technological developments of the new period that are expressed with the terms new media or digital media have changed the cultural structures substantially, have been influential on people's individual manners, attitudes and communication ways in interpersonal communication, have transformed the communication in compliance with the zeitgeist. Today, the users of this period are regarded as digital natives and the culture created by the digital natives differs considerably from the former generation. The children and teens who are the most mentioned group in the term of digital natives are inclined to technology more, learn the changing technologies promptly, use the technology in education, and grow up compatibly with technology as their way of socializing is on the basis of technology due to the fact that they have cognitive structures open to learning by force of their age. Yet, the term of digital natives is used in this essay not to separate acutely from digital immigrants, but to define teens in general as they use today's technology relatively more because of its educational aspects and new ways of socializing.

Now, traditional manners, attitudes, politics or culture no longer put up resistance against technology, but technology changes people, cultures, countries and policies at a considerable extent. Today, when political unrests occur in the communities sustaining their traditional characteristics, it is seen that governments block access of social media or decelerate the internet speed straight off the bat. In fact, the new generation technology has some characteristics that cannot withhold to access it. In such cases it is seen that the banned areas can be accessed via the changes of DNS settings or VPN programs. Among the factors of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, post 80 developments in communication technology are stated. It is possible to see the organizing and informing power of internet and especially social media in many incidents. For example, during the revolts of Arab Spring which started in Tunisia in 2010, and continued in Libya and Egypt, and directly or indirectly affected several Arabian countries, and during the protests against the economic policies of Iranian Government in the late 2017, the influence of social media burst into sight. On the other hand, even in the countries like North Korea that are closed to the world, internet and technological developments enable to get information about these countries and also compel the governments.

Another subject is culture's becoming homogeneous. With technology, the foreign concept of digital natives changed compared to the traditional generation, and this concept is no longer distant, unknown, weird, or mysterious. And even for digital natives, a stranger is someone who can be in communication easier than the nearby one. Because the stranger represents a subject that is harmless in a sense as he is faraway, and when he starts to harm he can be expelled by ignoring or blocking. Making communication easily brings along finishing it up easily. On the other hand, communicating with the stranger easily brings along mass movements. So, problems of the people at the far end of the world became the problems of all. Of course, the empathy here is not something deeply felt, but is generally shallow. Yet, it enabled the change of some policies, especially with the campaigns organized by Amnesty International or the individual persons on the sites like change.org for the convicts sentenced to death where capital

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