

Chapter 5

Production and Consumption in the Relationship Between Digital Culture and New Communication Technologies

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ABSTRACT

Digital culture is a concept that has gained attention due to the effectiveness of new communication technologies and new media in daily and social life. The structural link between digital culture and new communication technologies necessitates the transformation of concepts such as production and consumption and/or re-evaluation with additional expressions. Within the scope of this study, which focuses on the role of new communication technologies in digital culture, the dimensions of production and consumption are evaluated. According to the literature review carried out within the scope of the study, production and consumption processes can occur together in digital culture. At this point, users who are producers-consumers can also be producers of the content they consume by using the possibilities and features of new communication technologies in digital culture. The fact that production and consumption forms in new media environments directly or indirectly serve the capitalist order is another important piece of information reached within the scope of the study.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of culture, which encompasses material and spiritual values that a society produces and consumes has experienced a semantic expansion with digitalization (Akyüz, 2021, p. 139). Digital culture can serve as an indicator of all behaviors and processes in the process of using new media (Stapleton & Jaillant, 2022, p. 819). While traditional culture has formed over a rooted historical process, digital culture is still a new concept in terms of time. It is not easy to fully describe the cultural dimension in such

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-8397-8.ch005

a new environment. This is because the process of general recognition required to determine whether a content, behavior, or element is part of digital culture is still very new (Smith, 2007, pp. 14-18).

One of the tools and/or fields that express the basic concepts and analyzes in the formation and shaping of digital culture is new communication technologies or new media (Bowker, 2008, p. 9; Shifman, 2013, p. 18). New communication technologies are related to the processes that enable the technical formation of new media (Başer, 2010). New media, on the other hand, is considered as a field/tool that is associated with connections and tools such as “internet, computer, mobile phone, tablet” and covers a wide range of areas such as “web sites, news sites, commercial sites, official institutions and organizations” (Törenli, 2005).

In addition to the many features such as interaction, hypertext, asynchrony, storage, archiving, speed, the concept of culture, like many other fields and concepts, emerges with a new dimension/transformation in new media which differs from traditional media with its digitalization feature (Manovich, 2001, p. 40; Flavian & Gurrea, 2016). Production processes such as “writing news, creating audio-visual content and making sales” have been added to the consumption processes of users such as “reading, watching, listening, using and buying.” A new media user not only consumes the content presented to him/her, but also participates in the production processes by using new media fields and tools (Ruggiero, 2017). In this context, new media fields and tools can directly and/or indirectly affect the changing cultural life conditions due to reasons such as production-consumption balance and globalization (Akyüz, 2018, p. 120). Services in many areas such as trade, banking services, communication, health, education, media are offered digitally. This has led to the formation of a digital culture (Küçüktamer & Karakuyu, 2021, p. 71)

The digital culture in new media is multidimensional and one of these dimensions encompasses the relationships between production and consumption. In the relationship between traditional media and culture, the decisive points between the concepts of production-consumption and producer-consumer have not clearly stated yet (Bassett, 2013, pp. 323, 334). For example, while a journalist produces news, a reader consumes it. At this point, the relations of production and consumption have become apparent. Contrary to what has been stated, defining the relations of production and consumption in digital culture in new media becomes more complex. For example, the reader, who is the consumer of the news in the new media, can become a producer. Readers do not only comment on the news in an interactive environment, but they can also be directly or indirectly involved in the news content and thus in the news production process. In addition, readers, viewers and/or listeners can also produce news on personal portals, websites or social media networks/applications in the new media. This process in digital culture causes the production and consumption relations to be melted in a pot in some cases (Hansen et al., 2020).

In addition to technical classifications, the issue of capitalism-oriented problems is also present in the digital culture of new media, just as in the traditional version (Gere, 2019, pp. 19-20). In other words, the labor, product and/or service that emerges after the production processes has a dimension that serves large capital groups rather than individuals. This process, which is considered as cultural imperialism or cultural capitalism, shows that the production and consumption dimensions of digital culture require additional definitions and analysis after the new communication technologies (Başlar, 2013, p. 775). Anything that has the potential to generate capital in digital culture can be a part of the production process. For example, the content of a movie/series, a photograph of a famous singer, a report by a journalist, an ordinary post by a social media user can serve the production and consumption process in digital culture (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010, pp. 21-22).

This study, whose general framework is outlined, focuses on the role of new communication technologies in digital culture in terms of production and consumption. The study is important in terms of

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