

Editorial

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Digital vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilidades digitais

This monograph is the result of an activity of the "Program of Activities on Digital Vulnerability" (PROVULDIG-CM, S2015 / HUM-3434), funded by the Community of Madrid and the European Social Fund. PROVULDIG-CM is composed of five research groups from different universities: CEU San Pablo, Rey Juan Carlos University and Complutense de Madrid (CES Villanueva). This program is presented as a network of research groups and researchers concerned about the threats and challenges that Internet involves, especially vulnerable social groups, such as children, adolescents, young people and seniors. Some of the papers have originated from the I International Congress on Vulnerability and Digital Culture, organized by this program and held in Madrid on 18-19 October 2018.

The idea of digital vulnerability is complex. On the one hand, it can be placed around the risks a particular person or group can face either within the virtual world or because of it. From this point of view, and as an example, both children and adolescents become age groups prone to receive some kind of damage. It can also be understood as the set of conditions that make a person suffer some type of exclusion, in any of its variants. Finally, digital vulnerability is synonymous with helplessness. That may be caused, for example, by the inappropriate use of citizens' data, digital hypervigilance, some kind of cultural imposition, or by the massive presence of certain operating systems or software.

One of the ways to face up this reality is the necessary generalization of digital and media literacy. Citizens must know how to solve the challenges of digital life, in terms of full capacity for the conscious use of the virtual resources and instruments that it incorporates, and also of its critical interpretation. This approach should take into account technologies used, different processes and levels of interaction, contents published (with specific formulas of production and dissemination), ideologies and values that are disseminated, as well as languages and the aesthetic and expressive elements incorporated.

In this sense, the appropriation of cyberspace is also useful. We can find this sort of usefulness in different forms of cyber-activism and cyber-solidarity, in opposition to the domination of platforms and contents that belongs to large corporations, in the possibilities that Internet offers to support impoverished group, or as an expression channel for marginalized groups. In fact, it is necessary to strengthen their digital skills in order to prevent the exclusion of many people due to economic, social or other problems.

This issue presents six original articles with different contributions on Digital vulnerability and the ways they intersect with different forms of inequality, and some of them also present recommendations to tackle them.

In "The frequency of internet use as a determinant of vulnerability among the senior population: Regular user vs. no regular user", Belén Ávila Rodríguez de Mier and Noemí Martín García present results of a study conducted with active ageing senior individuals from Segovia capital. The authors found that the elders

were not technophobes, except for the use of social networks, and that there were considerable differences in the use of ICT according to age, gender and especially the level of education. The gender differences are further explored by Montes-Rodríguez, Herrada Valverde and Martínez Rodríguez' article "Women in a MOOC". Through a qualitative case study, the article shows how new online training designs, from a horizontal conception of learning, may function in a discriminatory way towards women. It demonstrates how the users have different levels of access and technological skills; asymmetrical ways of sharing knowledge and information; and how learning ubiquity and temporary flexibility to perform this type of training can represent additional difficulties for women.

Hernández-Pedreño, Romero-Sánchez and Gómez-Hernández offer a view on the context of public libraries, from a qualitative study with public librarians from the region of Murcia. The authors discuss the challenges that these professionals face to fulfill their commitment to increasing digital inclusion and literacy, namely the limited availability of human and material resources, as well as different needs and demands by different types of users.

Other articles focus on social media environments. Linares Bahillo, Aristegui Fradua and Beloki Marañón investigate the implications of the relationship between adolescents and YouTube for gender identities. Using focus groups, the authors conclude that the platform can function to reproduce different ways of macho-driven cyberviolence as well as to represent alternative channels and they generate spaces for breaking gender schemata. In "S.O.S. Protected timetable", Rafael Carrasco Polaino analyses the Twitter discussion around the protected schedule on television, as a form of discourse on vulnerability. Through a methodology of node network analysis and content analysis, the study identified that the subjects of greater concern were games of chance, sex and foods with a high index of sugar, and that the network presented very little cohesion and very little conversation or debate.

Lastly, Ramírez Plascencia's article "Bullying in The Age of The Wall" analyses the role of social media in the construction and circulation of extremist narratives. Particularly, it looked at posts, comments and news shared on Facebook in both English and Spanish to understand how these narratives encourage harassment against Latino students in The United States of America. Resorting to the narrative method, the article shows how inside extremist narratives converge traditional and novel forms of harassment towards minorities.

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