

Bloomsbury Education and Childhood Studies Article Template

Section	Youth
Article topic	Technology and Digital Media
Country	Finland
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Date created	04/2021
Length	1344 words

Keywords

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Insert here

Media literacy, Young People, New Literacies, Internet, Social Media, Finland

Glossary terms

- Define specialised terms or key concepts used in your article in the style of a glossary

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Text of the article

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Technology and Digital Media in Youth (Finland)

Finland is one of the top countries in Europe when it comes to use of the internet and digital technology. 100% of 16 to 24-year-olds use the internet, 98% of them many times in a day, 98% by smart phone, 80% by laptop, 37% by table computer and 28% by tablet. In the same age group, the most common use of the internet is to listen to music (98%), watch videos (97%), use email (96%), instant messaging (94%) and social networking sites (92%) (Official Statistic of Finland 2020). The use of the Internet has not changed much in five years, already in 2015 100% of 16 to 24-year-olds used the internet, 89% of them many times in a day (Official Statistic of Finland 2015). 15 to 25-year-olds used the media in 2018 5,7 hours in a day. 3.8. hours of the media in a day use was focused on the internet (Dentsu Data Services 2018).

According to the Studies of Young People Leisure Activities (Merikivi, Myllyniemi & Salasuo 2016) most common online activities in an age group 10–29 has been reading and watching a media content for example on YouTube or social networking sites, searching information, following news and participating in discussions for example on WhatsApp.

Meaning and impacts of the use of technology and digital media

According to the study of children and young people's leisure activities 2020 (The State Youth Council 2020) 15–29-year-olds use media especially for contacting with friends, information searching and following current affairs. These activities are very important for more than 50% of participants. 15 to 16-year-olds are very confident online, 70% of them say that they know which information they should and shouldn't share online (Smahel et al. 2020). 29% of them have had also negative online experiences, such as being exposed to online sexual or aggressive content, online bullying, hacking, viruses etc. The percentage is little bit lower than the European average 34%. However, 36% of Finnish 15 to 16-year-olds have been victims of aggressive behaviour. The percentage is more than the European average at 27%. At the same time 90% of Finns feel safe online, where the average in Europe is 71% in the age 15 to 16 (Smahel et al. 2020).

High levels of use of the internet and digital devices as well as world-class education system makes Finland one of the top countries in Europe when it comes to readiness for digital learning (Beblavý et al. 2019). Digitalization has also been one of the major principles of educational policy several years and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 has implied a huge step for online education. Finland has been among the top-ranked countries when it comes to highly digitally equipped schools and the computer per student ratio but the use of digital technology at school has been relatively low (Kupiainen 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic forced all schools in lower and upper secondary education to close schools and transfer to distance learning. Some studies show already that this did not happen without problems especially when it comes to educational equality (Vainikainen et al. 2020).

Trends in youth spending on technology

Most used social networking sites among 15 to 24-year-olds are WhatsApp (90% of the age group uses), YouTube (85%), Instagram (76%), Facebook (71%), Snapchat (67%) and Facebook Messenger (55%) (Official Statistics of Finland 2019). Other social media applications, such as Twitter (26%), are not so familiar in the lives of young people (Innowise 2020). Same age group is also keen to share content and links, photos, YouTube and other videos and news online (Official Statistics of Finland 2019). One interesting social networking service is TikTok that has been the most downloaded app in the end of the year 2019 (Pönkä 2020). The use of Facebook has decreased in all age groups in Finland 2019 to 2020, especially among 13 to 21-year-olds (Pönkä 2020). The popularity of YouTube, Instagram, photo and video sharing and rising usage of the TikTok verify the process of visualization of the media culture. But at the same time, 21% of 15 to 25-year-olds listen to podcasts as well. The most common content in podcasts is lifestyle (Pönkä 2020).

Media literacy policies, initiatives and practices for youth

Finland has been very active in media literacy policies. Media literacy has been part of the national core curriculum for basic education basically since 1970s (Kupiainen 2019). Latest core curriculum for basic education (Finnish National Board of Education 2016) includes multiliteracy as one of seven transversal competences that need to be taught in every school subject. Media literacy is part of multiliteracies.

Over the past twenty years Finnish governments have paid a lot of attention to young people's media literacy. Recent initiatives have been cultural policy guidelines for media literacy (Ministry of Education and Culture 2013) and updated and extended national media education policy (Ministry of Education and Culture 2019). The policy has three key objectives: comprehensive, high quality and systematic media education.

The New Literacies Development Programme 2020 to 2022 by The Ministry of Education and Culture launched 2021 competence descriptions for media literacy, ICT competence and programming competence for early childhood education and care, pre-primary education, and basic education. Competence descriptions are based in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014. The main goal of the New Literacies Development Project is to enhance equality in the teaching the digital competences through the country by publishing good and advanced competence descriptions for early childhood education and basic education in the fields of media literacy, programming competence and ICT-competence, and by funding projects at schools focusing on teaching and learning these competences.

Privacy, surveillance and ethics

According to the Pan European EuKids Online Survey 2010 Finland belongs among European countries to the cluster "supported risky explorers" (Helsper et al. 2013). As children gain more use of the internet and higher risks, parents also engage more actively in safeguarding their children's internet use. In the survey 97% of children at age 9 to 16 and 94% of their parents informed about active mediation on the children's use of internet, but parents' technical mediation of the child's internet use in Finland is below the average in Europe (Livingstone et al. 2011). However, the situation has changed in 10 years. In 2019 19% of 12 to 14 and 12% of 15 to 16-year-olds informed that their parents use technology to track where they are. The average in the Europe was little bit lower (Smahel et al. 2020).

In 2010 only 5% of 11–16-year-olds had experienced misuse of personal data online (Livingstone et al. 2011), 2019 the percentage has raised to 9% in the age group 12 to 14 and 12% in the age group 15 to 16 (Smahel et al. 2020).

In 2020 the discussion concerning young people being online has turned to the problems of distance learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, not due of the technology but due the health and well-being of youngsters.

Studies of effects of pandemic are still very much in progress. However, it has been already shown that the educational equity has been compromised during the distance learning period. This may be explained by young people's different possibilities to use technology as well as by teachers' varying digital competences (Vainikainen et al. 2020).

Youth resistance to technology

Youth resistance to technology has not been reported largely in Finland. Regular reports also focus more on the access and usage of the technology. However, according the 2020 Youth Barometer for example 10% of 15 to 29-years-old do not want to use digital social services (Berg and Myllyniemi 2021). In 2016 the majority of young people didn't want that role of technology to be more prominent in a future (Youth Barometer 2016). 89% of 15 to 29-years-

old thought that the technology will have bigger role in a future in peoples' everyday life but only 38% thought that this is what they want (Youth Barometer 2016). Technology is part of everyday life, but young people do not want it to take over their whole life.

Further reading and online resources

Insert her

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References [not included in total word count]

- You must include all relevant references in full
- Use the Contributor Guidelines to ensure your references are written out correctly
- Do not include any footnotes or endnotes

Insert here

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