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Media Literacy (Editorial)

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In the onlife scenario, in which human life is increasingly mediated by digital technologies and our physical and digital lives are mutually influential, Media Literacy is even more significant. The onlife condition challenges traditional ideas about identity, privacy, and ethics, and it requires an attentive thinking about what it means to be human in a world where digital and physical realms are inseparable. Media Literacy is profoundly implied in this thinking considering, in particular, what Buckingham refers to as the “bigger picture”. Buckingham uses this expression to emphasize the need for understanding how media fit into a broader social and cultural context that influences who we are, how we interact with others, and how we construct our identity in a digital world.

In this special issue, we present experiences and studies reflecting the importance of Media Literacy as a powerful framework to deal with fragmented information, invisible poverty, inclusion of older people and social issues such as prejudice and homophobic attitudes.

In “Deconstructing the Value-Neutrality of Technology”, the author reflects on the ethical and social implications of technological neutrality exploring how technology is never truly neutral but is embedded with moral and social values that influence our interactions.

The issue of information is also discussed in “Estrategias Efectivas en Programas de Alfabetización Mediática contra la Desinformación Digital”, where the core is the study of strategies for combating digital misinformation by analyzing media literacy programs in Europe and Latin America. The article highlights the importance of tailoring programs to the specific needs of target groups.

In “Podcasts and Inclusive Narratives”, the authors explore the use of podcasts as an educational tool to promote diversity and inclusion through audio stories, giving voice to marginalized communities and promoting a form of media literacy that embraces cultural and social diversity.

The podcast format also proves particularly valuable due to its accessibility, low technical barriers, and ability to accommodate local languages and cultural contexts. The article “Promoting Knowledge: Higher Education and Rural Ethiopia through a Podcast Journey” explores how podcasts can serve as educational tools in rural communities, focusing on their role in developing critical thinking, media literacy, and financial literacy.

"Literacia dos fãs da série brasileira 'As Five'" brings the attention to the role of Media literacy in popular culture, in particular dealing with the Brazilian series As Five, encouraging active engagement in public debate.

"El cuerpo es el texto: inteligencia artificial, textualidad, corporeidad y ciudadanía algorítmica" reflects on the influence of digitalization and emerging technologies through the lens of the body-digital interface, deepening the critical questions raised by Artificial Intelligence.

While "Older Adults' Safety and Security Online: A Post-Pandemic Exploration" describes the study on the older adults' habits regarding online safety, in particular after the pandemic, providing crucial reflections on how Media Literacy is now addressed to different age groups.

Finally, "Critical Thinking and Transilience: Possible Answers to Invisible Poverty" reflects on the relationship between invisible cultural poverty and information overload. In an era where people are bombarded with content at an unprecedented pace, developing a critical understanding of what is consumed has become increasingly difficult.

In conclusion, these contributions offer a rich and diverse overview of the challenges and responses of media literacy in the digital age. From the ethical issues surrounding technology to the need for fostering critical and inclusive thinking, and from the analysis of misinformation to viral narratives, these articles remind us of the importance of an educational approach that promotes awareness, autonomy, and digital citizenship.

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