



Youth in the Global Information and Social Processes: Perception, Participation and Interaction

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The age of global access to information has put young people of today to the crucial junction in their perception, participation and interaction with modern society. Early exposure to masses of facts infrequently leads to the loss of the novelty of being a young discoverer of life. However, the majority of young people are open to connect with the world, using modern media. In many cases the goal of communicating with ease and fluency with the world can still feel a long way off. Nowadays young people at this stage of their life journey more than ever need encouragement and support that maintains their enthusiasm and builds their confidence. They need to know how much they are valued and what they can now achieve.

At the same time they need a step-by-step strategy to push themselves to use new information technologies that they are learning and get concrete life objectives and a sense of progress. The primary goal of this issue is to underpin a number of initiatives to provide stimulating interaction patterns, rich contexts and easy-to-access practices with useful pedagogic implications.

While a substantial amount of social research on the problems of youth is reported in existing literature, there are only a few accounts on comprehensive vision of global media impact on the modern social processes and institutions, involving the interaction with the young. The ultimate aim of this issue is to show that the number of situations in which young people can participate effectively is growing, though these interactive situations are progressively more challenging in terms of technologies, speed and consequences.

Modern young people need to feel that they are moving on, that they are increasing their knowledge, improving their skills, and expanding the number of contexts in which they can effectively participate. The materials of the issue offer explanations for the findings, commenting on the results, and incorporate insights from exemplary initiatives described in discovery-based research. Revised and expanded information on the key concepts related to social interaction in the world of global media results in the attempt to provide an expert view on modern chances and challenges.

The issue features quite a number of dimensions, such as cultural and sexual pluralism, economic globalization, the strategic values and utilities of modern technologies in education, an upsurge in teaching and learning with the Internet. An inevitable result of increasing technological power on the world stage, as well as the manifestation of the unique charm of the youth, make the issue an important reference point for further research. The important aspect of each article is that it includes an effective research cycle: we start by looking at what happens in modern Russian and Kazakhstan society (an observation stage) and by collecting facts, then we try to understand the trends and decide (reflection stage) what we can do to improve the situation, and finally, we try out our strategies (an action stage) in real-life situations.

The topics, raised in this issue, have been chosen with flexibility and diversity in mind. Readers are invited to stimulate further opinion exchange, based on the input materials, provided in the issue. Careful analysis and evaluation of the results are sure to strengthen our understanding of the young. We emphasise the interconnectedness of the research results which lead to the development of integrated approaches to the problems of today. A key component of the experimental description is reflection: for this reason every article ends with a discussion part which establishes a strong foundation for new opportunities and development. Each article comprises a number of activities which offer applicable, intercultural and interdisciplinary resources.

Modern global information and social perception, participation and interaction encompass the idea of multiple intelligences which incorporates verbal ability to use languages in creative ways, the ability for rational, analytic thinking, the ability to form mental models and use imagery, as well as interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities to understand oneself and others. Describing these abilities through the prism of research and careful investigation opens the doorway to understanding of the present and the future.