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INFLUENȚA ZIARULUI ȘCOLAR ASUPRA CONSUMULUI DE PRESĂ DE CĂTRE ELEVI. STUDIU DE CAZ: ISRAEL

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Ziarul școlar este o prezență obișnuită în instituțiile școlare din Israel, ca și în multe alte școli din lume de mai mulți ani. Acesta servește ca instrument de comunicare educațională care în ultimii ani a suferit mai multe schimbări, în principal, din cauza cenzurii, dificultăților de finanțare și pierderii de cititori în favoarea internetului și a rețelelor sociale. Zarul școlar a trecut printr-un proces rapid de digitalizare după anul 2008. Articolul de mai jos dezvăluie modalitatea în care ziarul școlar influențează interesul față de presă, în general, al elevilor, prezentând și factorii care influențează acest interes și consum, cum ar fi vârsta și sexul, schimbăruile care se produc în societate, nivelul de libertate de exprimare și cenzură în țară, conținut și preferințele personale. Articolul se bazează pe un studiu de caz experimental care a avut loc într-o școală israeliană. la care au participat două grupuri de elevi: elevii pasionați de domeniul jurnalistic și care se implică în procesul de realizare a ziarului școlar (activi) și un eșantion de elevi care nu se implică în activități de realizare a ziarului școlar, dar care sunt cititori ai acestora. Scopul cercetării este de a examina efectele ziarului școlar asupra comportamentului elevilor.

Cuvinte-cheie: *ziar școlar, studii de jurnalism, criză media, social media, efecte comportamentale, Israel, Moldova.*

THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER INFLUENCE ON THE CONSUMPTION OF MASS MEDIA BY SCHOOL STUDENTS. CASE STUDY: ISRAEL

The school newspaper is a common phenomenon in schools in Israel, as in many schools of the world for many years. The school newspaper (SN) serves as an educational communication tool that has undergone many changes over the years, mainly due to censorship, funding difficulties, and loss of readers in favor of the internet and social networks. With the crisis in the world of print journalism in 2008, the SN went through a rapid digitization process. The article sheds light on the consumption of the media and the press, and especially on the journalism studies and the SN impact on students while discussing the factors that influence this consumption, such as age and gender, freedom of expression and censorship, content, and personal preferences. The article is based on an experimental study case study that took place in an Israeli school. in which two groups of students participated, the students involved in the process of making SN- the active ones and a sample of school students who are not involved in the process, but are the SN readers. The purpose of this article is to examine the SN effects on the students, especially the behavioral effects concerning newspaper consumption.

Keywords: *school newspaper, journalism studies, media crisis, social media, behavioral effects, students, Israel, Moldova.*

L'INFLUENCE DU JOURNAL SCOLAIRE SUR LA CONSOMMATION DE PRESSE DES ÉLÈVES. ÉTUDE DE CAS: ISRAËL

Le journal de l'école est régulièrement présent dans les écoles israéliennes, comme dans de nombreuses autres écoles à travers le monde, depuis de nombreuses années. Il sert d'outil de communication pédagogique qui a subi ces dernières années plusieurs changements, principalement en raison de la censure, des difficultés de financement et de la perte de lecteurs au profit d'Internet et des réseaux sociaux. Le journal de l'école a connu un processus rapide de digitalisation après 2008. L'article ci-dessous révèle comment le journal de l'école influence l'intérêt des élèves pour la presse en général, en présentant également les facteurs qui influencent cet intérêt et cette consommation, tels que l'âge et le sexe, les changements survenus dans la société, le niveau de liberté d'expression et de censure dans le pays, le contenu et les préférences personnelles. L'article est basé sur une étude de cas expérimentale qui s'est déroulée dans une école israélienne. à laquelle ont participé deux groupes d'élèves: des élèves passionnés de journalisme et qui sont impliqués dans le processus de réalisation du journal de l'école (actifs) et un échantillon d'élèves qui ne s'impliquent pas dans les activités de réalisation du journal de l'école, mais qui en sont des lecteurs. Le but de la recherche est d'examiner les effets du journal scolaire sur le comportement des élèves.

Mots-clés: *journal scolaire, études de journalisme, crise médiatique, médias sociaux, effets comportementaux, Israël, Moldova.*

ВЛИЯНИЕ ШКОЛЬНОЙ ГАЗЕТЫ НА ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ СТУДЕНТАМИ ПРЕССЫ. ПРИМЕР ИЗРАИЛЯ

Школьная газета уже много лет регулярно присутствует в израильских школах, как и во многих других школах мира. Она служит инструментом образовательной коммуникации, которая за последние годы претерпела несколько изменений, в основном из-за цензуры, трудностей с финансированием и потери читателей в Интернете и социальных сетях. Школьная газета прошла быстрый процесс оцифровки после 2008 года. В приведенной ниже статье показано, как школьная газета влияет на интерес учащихся к средствам массовой информации в целом, а также факторы, влияющие на этот интерес и потребление, такие как возраст и пол, изменения, происходящие в обществе, уровень свободы слова и цензуры в стране, содержание и личные предпочтения. Статья основана на экспериментальном примере из одной израильской школы. Цель исследования - изучить влияние школьной газеты на поведение учащихся.

Ключевые слова: школьная газета, журналистские исследования, медиакризис, социальные медиа, поведенческие эффекты, Израиль, Молдова.

Introduction

The phenomenon of school journalism is an old and common phenomenon in schools around the world and in Israel. The school newspaper (SN) is used as a communicative educational tool that should serve valuable social goals while aspiring to education for democracy through it. However, over the years he has experienced difficulties, mainly due to censorship imposed on his content, financing difficulties, and the internet's battle for the hearts of the young consumer. At the beginning of its journey, the printed SN was produced within the school informally and from the end of the 1980th, it began to be integrated within the communication and journalism studies in a formal way. Starting in the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, with the crisis in the

print press, the SN began to face the intensification of the Internet and the rapid transition to digital journalism. As a result, there was a change in media education policy worldwide, which aimed at combining learning with technological emphasis. According to the research, many teenagers in these years started consuming digital media and neglecting traditional media.

The study dealt extensively with the influence of the media on the youth and attributed significant, often negative, effects to the mediums of television and the Internet. On the other hand, the press was often attributed to many positive effects. Today, in the third decade of the 21st century, the printed school newspaper has almost disappeared, and its place has been taken by the digital school newspaper, mainly informally as an institutional newspaper that reflects the school atmosphere and especially serves the institution' administration. In Israel, digital journalism is active in many schools, starting from elementary schools, through middle schools and high schools. In some schools, the newspaper is considered a product of communication and journalism classes, which usually is distributed as part of the communication and journalism studies or in the school's homepage or social network. Communication and journalism study programs have undergone many changes especially with the internet empowerment in the world as well as in Israel, with the emphasis today being on media literacy, communication, and society. As of 2014, extensive journalistic activity began in Moldova schools too, mainly emphasizing media literacy and digital journalism.

The issue of media and journalism consumption which is presented in this article was examined as part of an experimental case study conducted among two research groups consisting of high school students who are exposed to the school newspaper: the experimental group, consisted from communication students, and the control group, the students who only read the SN. This article examines three main issues: the consumption of media and journalism by youth, the impact of media and journalism on teenagers, and the impact of media education and the school newspaper on media consumption, reading, and writing. In the following will be presented: the research findings, discussion, conclusions and recommendations. The purpose of this article is to present the importance of the teenagers' exposure to quality means of communication such as newspapers, and thereby, the exposure to the school newspaper, which contributes massively to the students.

The Consumption of Mass Media and Journalism by Youth

The changes that took place in the communications industry after the 2008 crisis, especially with the strengthening of the Internet [31] led to a change in the consumption habits of many, among them teenagers who started consuming the Internet and social networks and gradually abandoned the traditional media, books, and newspapers, and as a consequence there was a sharp decrease in reading and writing activities [5, p. 99]. In studies conducted after the press crisis, it was found that Israeli and American teenagers prefer consuming the Internet, social networks and watching television over reading books or newspapers, although it was documented a certain degree of consumption of these two last ones [22, pp. 167-168]

Also, according to a survey conducted in Israel in 2022 among 13–17-year-olds, the most popular medium is the social networks, although they are still consuming newspapers and magazines, but much less consumption extent. It was also found that the gender and age variables have influenced on the degree consumption: girls are exposed to newspapers and books more than boys and read more than them [13]. Also, in an Israeli study by Sharon (2004) [30], the reading habits of the youth in Israel were slightly

above the world average, with the boys reading less than the average, while the girls read more than boys. These activities degree regarding genders is still relevant for today according to several surveys and research [6, p.19].

The consumption of media was sometimes done through school lessons either in formal or informal classes such as journalism classes or school newspaper activities after class [10, pp.11-12]. According to the research, teenagers always tended to the more popular means of mass communication, from the moment they broke through, such as the cinema in the 1920, the television in the 1950 and the Internet and social media in the 21st century, over books and newspapers [5, p. 99], [23]. As for the contents of the school newspaper, in early an later research the interest degree the students show in them and the preferred contents for reading show that the subjects are from their world as puberty difficulties, authorities, school issues, love, place in the society and more, and they usually choose to consume the various contents according to the type of format and media in which they appear [24, p. 1], [20, p.509. Thus, for example, the contents of entertainment and society are consumed by youth from popular mediums, television, and the Internet [25, p. 50], whereas the content of knowledge, learning, and current affairs, is mostly consumed from television, books, and newspapers [26, p. 516].

The mass media and journalism influence youth

The media and the press have a significant influence on young people. They can shape their views of the world, their political beliefs, and their values and influence their behavior. In general, research has tended to deal massively with popular media in which harmful effects were attributed to them [11, p. 177], [27, p. 286] and less concerned with the media effects with limited effects, such as books and newspapers. Since the crisis in the media in 2008 and the strengthening of the Internet, the youth began to abandon the traditional media, and as a result, the research began to deal with the harmful effects of the Internet and especially social networks [5, p. 99], [12]) such as negative emotional consequences: depression, bully, and exposure to violent content. According to the early theories, as the uses and gratifications theory, and the functionalist theory, the youth are not always aware of the popular communication means effects, such as the Internet and television, whether positive or negative effects [38, p.605], [20, p. 509]. However, also in late research the less effective the means of communication, the more one can resist the influences. In this case, the media, as in the case of newspapers, books, or school press, serves functionally the young consumer who can decide whether to consume them or not. Also, McLuhan's classic theory "The medium is the message" [24, p. 1] is still relevant today, since the youth are influenced by the medium they are exposed to, and the fact that they are sometimes unaware of the harmful effects of the popular media, which explains the fact that the influence is so strong that they cannot resist it. As for the limited media, teenagers revealed that although they are not much exposed to them, it rather contributes to them cognitively in terms of an increase in writing and reading activities, exposure to higher quality content, news, and current affairs consumption [15, p. 405], High School journalism matters [16]), but the effects on civic activities involvement are mainly gained through social networks [13].

The Influences of the media and journalism studies, and the school newspaper (SN) on the media consumption, reading, and writing activities by the youth

Mass communication and media education have an impact on the socialization process of teenagers [1]. Since young consumers are exposed to a constant and massive flow of information consumed by

the media, sometimes in an uncontrolled, manipulative, and false way, they may be negatively affected. Considering this, many of schools in Israel, Moldova and around the world have begun to include media studies in their curriculum with the concept that these young consumers must be given tools to deal with the media such as developing critical thinking, analyzing media content, and evaluating their impact, performing control and reflection, consuming quality content, distinguishing between truth and fake news, especially after the 2008 media crisis and the empowerment of the internet [2, p. 119], [32], [37, p. 8], [17], [18]. According to the research, the school newspaper activities and the communication and journalism studies have many positive effects on students such as: developing critical thinking skills, understanding the importance of freedom of expression, involvement in the community, and understanding current affairs [16]), [15, p. 405], [9, pp. 201-208]). The phenomenon of school journalism has a long and winding history in the education system. With the global crisis of 2008 in the press, the printed school press has also underwent a significant digitization process that accompanies it to nowadays in the education system with the sympathetic support of the school principals and the supervision of the media [4], [5, p. 99], [7], [33]. The study attributes the school newspaper's positive effects such as developing writing skills, sharing opinions, civic, political, and social awareness, and even acquiring a profession for the future [37, p. 8]. Journalism students consume a higher degree of additional communication means, primarily the Internet and social networks like other teenagers, but also, they consume more newspapers and current information. According to a IJC's study conducted in Moldova the students who participated in a media literacy program tended to be more critical consumers of the media and more involved in civic life [17]. Despite the clear advantages of media studies and journalistic activity at school, many policymakers at the education system all over the world included the Israeli media and communication supervision has changed the media curricula since the rise of the Internet, and the place of the SN, as well as journalism studies, has changed and diminished [33]. The global educational trend concerning media and journalism studies, included in Israel and Moldova, focuses on digital media literacy, and places less emphasis on teaching journalism and producing the school newspaper. Today, most newspapers are produced digitally for all age groups in school [34], [35].

The Research Method

This study was done in Israel and was conducted in a six-year high school, where the school newspaper (SN) is tested as a case study. The research is empirical-quantitative, correlative, and inductive, examining the phenomenon of the SN and media studies' effects on media consumption. ***The sample:*** in the study took part 230 students from the 7th - 12th grade from the Ort Kramim Karmiel school, Israel, whose SN serves as a case study. About one-third of the students are part of the communication studies and are active in the SN (the experimental group -writers), and about two-thirds are not communication students and are not active in the SN (the control group - the SN readers). Gender: in the writers group: 21.1% boys and 78.9% girls. Age: The largest number of journalism students is between 16-18 years old (63.7%) and the minority is between 12-15 years old (36.2%). The readers: A representative sample of 25 students from each grade was randomly selected. 53.2% of the students are boys and 46.8% are girls. ***The Tools****:* (a) media consumption; (b) attitudes towards social and political issues; (c) attitudes towards the SN on questions such as freedom of expression, content, relevance, importance, involvement of educational staff, and format. Attitudes towards the school press were measured using

two digital questionnaires sent by corporate email, one to each research group, with the experimental group receiving several questions in addition to those received by the control group. The questions were formulated as multiple-choice questions according to several methods. ***The research procedure***: towards the end of 2017, between May-June, the questionnaires were sent to the research students via the corporate email in the Google FORMS application. The research data was collected directly from the Google FORMS application and transferred to typing and coding. The students were told that the research purpose is to find out the effects of the SN, the degree to which it fulfills their needs, and its relevance to them. The students were asked to fill out the questionnaires during class, to avoid different influences from parents and friends on the answers. The students were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. **The research Findings**. In the research are 5 hypotheses, the first three regard the influences, and the 2 last ones regard the functions that the SN fulfills and the status and relevance of it. The Hypothesis relevant to our article is especially the variables regarding the media, mass communication, and SN consumption.

The consumption of the school newspaper. According to the hypothesis, there is a significant difference in the degree to which the SN influences media consumption, according to each of the 2 study groups: the writers will be more influenced than readers are by the SN, due to their massive exposure degree to SN and will consume media differently from the readers do. The social-behavioral impact of exposure to SN is expressed on several levels: SN reading habits, consumption of additional media means increased reading and writing activity.

The school newspaper reading degree and frequency. A significant difference was found in SN reading habits, according to both study groups. The writers report a higher degree of reading SN and more frequently than readers. 68.7% of the writers read SN, compared with 47.11% of the readers (*Figure 1*)**.**

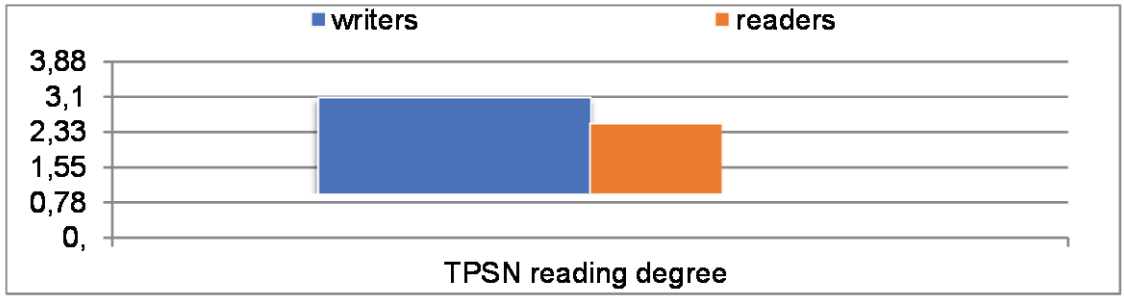


Fig. 1. SN reading degree according to the study groups

Source: by author.

More Reading Habits of the school newspaper. A significant difference was found in other reading habits of SN, according to both study groups. 46.5% of the writers prefer to read SN, when they are alone, compared with only 15.2% of the readers. Most of the study students do not prefer to read the SN at school, do not read SN with their family or friends, do not talk with their friends about SN, and most of the writers read the SN after it is distributed in class, compared to the readers.

News consumption degree from various media means after exposure to school newspaper. A significant difference was found in the additional media consumption following exposure to SN, according to both study groups: the writers reported that their news consumption degree from the various media means is higher, compared to the readers.

The Newspapers reading and writing degree after exposure to school newspaper. A difference showed between the variances of both study groups regarding the reading and writing activities following the exposure to SN. The writers reported a higher degree of reading and writing activities following their exposure to SN than readers (*Figure 2*).

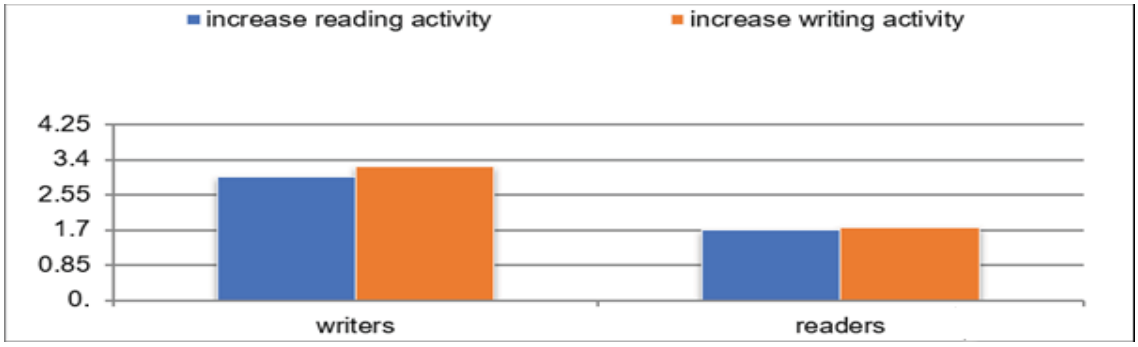


Fig. 2. Increased reading and writing activities after exposure to SN

Source: by author.

The school newspaper contents consumption. The interest degree in the preferred contents of the SN was tested according to both research groups. The writers are more interested in SN content than readers are. Also, a difference was found between writers and readers concerning the preferred content types. The writers preferred content of humor and amusement, entertainment, "the wandering camera" (photos from school of students and teachers), investigative and society articles, astrology, fashion, and beauty, whereas the readers preferred content of entertainment, world news, science and technology, interviews, sports, fashion, beauty, and care. The favored common contents of both research groups are entertainment, fashion, and beauty. However, two types of content that are not common to these groups are sports, economics, science and technology contents.

Discussion

The degree to which the SN (school newspaper) is read, its reading habits, and its effects on the consumption of media, news, and content, as well as on reading and writing activities, were examined in the study. The findings revealed that most of them correspond to the findings of the studies and theories concerning these issues. One of the data refers to the relatively low percentage of SN consumption and its reading, mainly by the readers, compared to the writers. Reinforcement of the low level in which the readers consume the SN, and the relatively low level of performing reading and writing activities, compared to the writers, can be found in studies, in which concern is expressed about this phenomenon. In studies conducted mainly after the crisis in the print press of 2008, it was found that Israeli and

American teenagers prefer to consume the Internet and social networks over reading books [6, p. 19], [23], [13]. However, newspapers and magazines are still consumed by youth, but much less than other media, with 33%. We also found in our research that the SN contributes to an increase in reading and writing activities, exposure to higher-quality content, and news consumption, especially among writers. These findings that strengthen this phenomenon can be found in Israeli and American studies from a decade ago according to which significant exposure to the press, for example, has a positive effect on an increase in reading and writing activities, the development of verbal skills, and political attitudes [9, pp. 201-208], [15, p. 405], [16]. According to our research findings, journalism students consume a significant level of additional media and consume more news information through the SN, compared to the readers. Since the study did not deal much with the effect of exposure to the SN on the consumption of other means of communication, we can only assume that it is logical that journalism and communication students would be more interested in these fields from the start. The findings of our study correspond with some study findings conducted in this field before, mainly in relation to the preferences of the readers. In general, teenagers often preferred popular mass communication means, such as cinema [8, pp. 34]), and later since the media crisis of 2008 and the empowerment of the internet and social networks, rather than the press and books [13].

According to the uses and gratifications theory and the functionalist theory, the youth are not always aware of the negative effects of the popular media, such as the Internet and television. However, the less influential the media is, the more the consumer can resist them. In this case, the media, as in the case of newspapers and books, they functionally serve the young consumer which can decide whether to consume them or not [20, p. 509]. McLuhan's classic theory "the medium is the message" [24, p. 1] is also relevant to the school newspaper, since according to the findings of our study, the students are affected by the very exposure to the kind of the SN format, as some of them expressed interest in digital production (mainly the readers) and some of them in the printed format (mainly the writers), which illustrates the hybrid process in which the print press is, that led to a combined format production to this day [5, p. 99], [9, pp. 201-208]. According to this theory, the youth choose their content many times according to the type of format. Thus, for example, the contents of entertainment, society, and identification are mostly consumed by the youth from popular mediums, especially from the television and the Internet [9, pp. 207]) whereas the contents of knowledge, learning, and current affairs are mostly consumed by the television, books, and newspapers [26, p. 516], [10, pp.10-11]. These findings strengthen our research findings, as the writers prefer to consume the knowledge and learning content from the school newspaper, in contrary to the readers.

Another interesting finding that emerged from our research is that no significant difference was found regarding the type of main content preferred by the research students, who preferred "less quality and light" content first, entertainment and humor content, and only then the "higher quality and important" content - social and current affairs content. Moreover, the need for entertainment is one of the important needs that the school newspaper fulfills among people of this age. In addition, the findings of our study are supported by the findings of early studies, according to which teenagers were always attracted to the content close to everyday life and especially issues related to adolescence such as sexuality, love, society, parents and studies, both as writers and as readers [28, p. 321] and according to later studies [29, p. 513], [6, pp.35-36].

Conclusions

1. As the youth consume mainly the new media that has negative influence and consume much less the traditional media as books and newspapers that has positive influence, the focus must be on the return to the positive mediums. This effort must be done by the research and the education policymakers, especially the media and journalism supervision, for example including new journalism curriculum.

2. The study results relating the school newspaper consumption show a significant difference between the two study groups, the writers, and the readers, in favor of the writers, in positive terms relating to the degree of school newspaper reading, consumption of other media, higher degree of writing and reading, and the main consumption contents. As the writers significantly are more exposed to the school newspaper, they are more influenced by it. To gain the same influences upon the readers, the exposure should be extended.

3. Since the variables, age, and gender, are relevant in terms of exposure degree to the school paper and its impact, we should concern these variables to optimize the school paper effects according to each study group and raise the school newspaper exposure to boys adequately.

4. The school newspaper has the same effect in a few important components on all students, indicating that these variables should continue to optimize the school paper effects.

Recommendations

Following on from the research findings, several general recommendations are made for increasing the consumption of the school newspaper and thereby increasing the extent of its reading and writing activities, consumption of quality content and exposure to means of communication that led to a contribution to the youth and are not harmful to them like the newspaper and the book:

1. Continue research in the field of school press consumption and journalism studies and provide specific practical recommendations to the education providers.

2. Using the TEACEN model to produce a school newspaper as a theoretical and practical model.

3. Addressing all the elements of influence that increase the consumption of the school newspaper, such as freedom of expression and administrative support.

4. Exposing students to quality media, dealing with interesting and useful content for their age that could contribute positively to their personal development.

5. Using periodically controlling surveys and questionnaires among the school's readers, especially students and less the management.

6. Elimination of those practices that harm producing the school newspapers, such as censorship and intrusive involvement.

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