Original research paper

SOCIAL MEDIA – "THE CLASSROOM" OF THE DIGITAL AGE

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Tatjana Vulić

Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Communicology and Journalism,
University of Niš, Serbia

Abstract. *The goal of this research paper is to examine the frequency of use of social media by high school students in Serbia, as well as whether they use the social media to keep themselves informed and adopt informal knowledge, that is, to educate themselves. With regards to this topic, several research goals were set. The respondents were 155 students from "Prva kragujevačka gimnazija" (transl.: The First High School of Kragujevac) and "Prva tehnička škola" (transl.: The First Technical School) in Kragujevac, from the 1st to the 4th grade. The sample included 86 boys (55.5%) and 69 girls (44.5%). The questionnaire with 13 items was created specifically for this survey and it included the answer choices for the specific phenomena we investigated. Descriptive statistics was used during this research. Research findings suggest that high school students in Serbia spend more and more time on social media, primarily on Facebook (133 out of 155 respondents) which they also see as a source of information. Moreover, 49% of the respondents claimed that they trust this type of information and find it significant in peer-to-peer communication. Although more than a half of the respondents do not adopt role models and idols through social media, 45% of them still said that they have this tendency. Furthermore, this research has also shown that the largest number of respondents express their personal point of views on social media, twice to three times a week.*

Key words: *social media, digital age, high school students, information*

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern, third millennium world, where technology rapidly develops, information reaches people almost immediately, and modern man has enormous choices when and how he wants to learn - this cannot be compared with any other period in the development

of the social history of the world. The modern age has brought the new rules. At the end of the 20th century, there was a global epidemic of "dependence" on computers and new technologies. Referring to the frequent anecdotes about people whose life had changed drastically due to the excessive use of computers, American psychiatrist Ivan Goldberg[1] coined the term *internet addiction* in 1995, using it as a joke. It seems that the modern man "suffers" from the ailment of the digital age. There is no doubt that the Internet gives us unprecedented opportunities for education, improvement, information, enrichment of cultural and overall life styles and habits. According to Potter, "we cannot see the computer as one of the channels of message distribution; it is an innovation that is becoming a part of the distribution of messages in all existing mass media" (Potter, 2011, 212, 213). The age of information expansion of the 21st century was announced by a Brit Brian Makner (McNair, 1996), as follows: "This will be an epoch characterized by media interaction, accessibility and diversity, with new freedoms for the audience (or "consumers" if we prefer to call them that). This will also be the epoch of the generally available "cyberporn", network congestion and decline or disappearance of some traditional media" (Briggs & Cobley, 2005, 275, 276). McNair predicted that the modern age would not wait for a sleepy man, but would demand an instant reaction to changes, with speed and efficiency being an imperative, while more and more perfect technical and technological findings are becoming our reality. "New technologies have exponentially increased the communication speed. International meetings and exchange of documents take place at the locations where this could not have been imagined earlier. You can fax your CV to a potential employer the same day you saw the job ad. While at the same time the job ad can be found on the Internet" (Tubbs, 2013, 672). The age of digital platforms has brought a faster, more perfect, powerful, but also cheaper information and imposed the need for active use of technology and the Internet services. Modern authors, such as Giles (2011), compare the Internet with a car that has become a part of the everyday life, so it is no longer seen as a separate entity. According to the data available in the report from The UN Broadband Commission and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the most famous network was used by 3.5 billion people, which is 47% of the world's population.[2] Mobile devices are actively used by 51% of the world's population, while one-third of all people have profiles on at least one of the social media with nearly 2 billion users accessing social media through their mobile phones[3]. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the Internet in Serbia is used by almost 3100000 citizens every day or almost every day, while the number of users has increased by 1,4% compared with 2015[4]. And while the number of Internet users, primarily young people, is increasing month after month, nearly 30% of people in Serbia still do not have access to the Internet. Studies (for example by Pavlović, Stojanović, 2016; Mrđa, 2010) suggest that it is high-school students that are primarily interested in using internet technologies and they are the ones who spend most of their leisure time on the Internet. Mrđa's research (2010) on the frequency of computer usage indicates that high school

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[1] http://www.psycom.net/iasg.html, visited on 6/9/2017
[2] http://www.b92.net/tehnopolis/internet.php?yyyy=2016&mm=09&nav_id=1178931, visited on 6/9/2017
[3] http://digitalizuj.me/2016/02/koliko-smo-digitalni-statistika-koriscenja-digitalnih-tehnologija-u-regionu-2016/, visited on 6/9/2017
[4] http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/G2016/pdf/G20166004.pdf, visited on 6/9/2017

students are the social group that most often uses computers and that in addition to numerous school obligations during the school week, 39.3% of them still spend 1 to 3 hours a day on the computer, while 18.6% of them spend even 5 hours. This time spent on the Internet increases on weekends. This research highlights that almost all of the surveyed high school students regularly use the Internet for various activities, with 99.8% of them saying those activites are primarily related to fun, socializing, communication, obtaining information and learning (Mrđa, 2010, 97-99).

Unlike the economically developed countries which have not faced any problems when introducing information and communications technology (ICT) in school curricula in the past decades, the countries in transition, on the other hand, due to the economic underdevelopment have been faced with the challenges when introducing ICT and increasing the speed of the Internet at all levels of educational system - from preschool, school to university. "Accessibility as one of the main characteristics of the Internet enables quick and easy access to information, changes the ways of learning, and develops new types of communication among young people" (Pavlović, Stojanović, 2016, 439). However, although faced with numerous economic problems just like other countries in transition, Serbia has decided to upgrade digital technologies as well as to make them a part of the education strategy. Some documents that have been adopted confirm this statement: Information Society Development Strategy in Serbia by 2020[5], The Education Development Strategy for Serbia by 2010[6], while the adoption of the Media Strategy for Serbia is expected by the end of this year[7]. Since the media is one of the most important factors in the upbringing and socialization of young people primarily, we can undoubtedly say that the participation of the media in the educational process is big. The availability of the Internet and digital platforms in both the formal and non-formal education process creates far greater opportunities to acquire knowledge. Globally, it has become almost a habit for people to take education from schools to their homes, libraries, internet cafes and to learn in the way they want (Collins & Hallverson, 2009). This kind of learning is attracting more and more attention worldwide. However, even the developed countries do not adapt their education system to these requirements so easily. Several authors talk about this, such as: Jukes, I., McCain, I. & Crocett, I. (2010.), Gee, P. J., (2010), McLeod, S. & Lehmann, C., (2012). Dieter Baacke (Bake, 2013) believes that the digital world is increasingly replacing the real world, corroborating this claim with the opinion that communication among people takes places via channels, that is media, and the media themselves are no longer there to reflect or duplicate reality, but they rather construct it because they influence the decisions on what will be in our observational horizon and in what form. For Small and Vorgan, media are the direct products of technology that evolve along with it, so these authors note that the 21st centurytechnology is developing faster than ever in history, which affects the people themselves. Small and Vorgan divide the modern population into "digital natives[8]" and "digital immigrants[9]" with the widespread

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[5]http://mtt.gov.rs/download/3/Strategija_razvoja_informacionog_drustva_2020.pdf,pristupila, visited on 6/9/2017

[6]http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/strategija_obrazovanja_do_2020.pdf, visited on 6/9/2017

[7]http://rs.n1info.com/a278959/Vesti/Vesti/Nova-medijska-strategija-do-kraja-godine.html, visited on 6/9/2017

[8]Digital natives are considered to be the generations born after 1982.

[9]See: Small, G., Vorgan, G., (2011). Internet mozak, Kako digitalna civilizacija oblikuje mozak naše dece,

technology creating a solid basis for the users to actively participate in the creation of media content. Multitasking during knowledge acquisition is seen as a specific trait of "digital natives". Jukes, McCain and Crocett (2010) are among the theoreticians who support the view that nowadays, young people always do multiple digital tasks almost at the same time, including internet browsing, watching videos, chatting online with their friends, and downloading music and other content while at the same time doing the homework. It is necessary to mention that there are also authors who support the view that a person cannot multitask (Medina, 2008). Namely, these authors point out that people are simply biologically unable to process more pieces of information at the same time. However, considering different points of view, we need to conclude that digital learning is based on the fact that new technologies change the way a digital age man learns, is entertained, socializes, but also thinks and forms the attitudes about life and society.

2. RESEARCH

The subject of our research is the frequency of use of the social media by high school students in Serbia, as well as whether they keep themselves informed and acquire informal knowledge through the media. Based on the research subject, we have set the research goals:
1. Investigate how frequently high school students use social media.
2. Investigate how frequently information is obtained via social media.
3. Investigate whether high school students trust the information and knowledge obtained through social media
4. Investigate whether high school students use the information they have acquired through social media in their everyday life.
5. Investigate whether information acquired through social media is used in communication with friends.

The main hypothesis of this research is that there are no statistically significant differences in the attitudes of the surveyed high school students based on the investigated attitudes on the frequency of the Internet usage in relation to students' gender, the gradethey attend, the school success and the place of residence (rural or urban environment), that is, sociodemographic variables.

The dependent variable in this research is the attitude of the surveyed high school studentson the frequency of usage of social networks as sources of information.

2.1. The sample

The respondents were 155 students from "Prva kragujevačka gimnazija" (transl.: The First High School of Kragujevac) and "Prva tehnička škola" (transl.: The First Technical School) in Kragujevac, from 1st to 4th grade. The sample included 86 boys (55.5%) and 69 girls (44.5%).

Psihopolis Insitut, Novi Sad

Table 1 Sample structure

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Boys	86	55,5	55,5	55,5
Girls	69	44,5	44,5	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

2.2. Research Instrument

The questionnaire with 13 items was created specifically for this survey and it included the answer choices for the specific phenomena we investigated. The data were collected by the survey procedure. Statistical data analysis tool (SPSS for Windows 17.0) was used to analyse the data, which helped obtain the quantitative data that were used for further analysis and interpretation. Descriptive statistics as well as the scaling technique were used during this research.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

The first question we asked the respondents was "Do you use the Internet?" - Almost all 155 of them answered "yes". This allowed us to continue to investigate our set goals. The first research goal we set was to determine how often the high school students use social media.

Table 2 Frequency of social media use

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	140	90,3	90,3	90,3
No	15	9,7	9,7	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

Table 2 clearly shows that a vast majority of the respondents use social media. That is, out of 155 students, 140 of them said that they use at least one social media, which is 90.3% of the total number of respondents. Less than 10%, more precisely 9.7%, that is 15 students said that they do not use social media.

Table 3 Frequency of use of certain social media

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Facebook	133	85,8	85,8	85,8
Twitter	6	3,9	3,9	89,7
My space	2	1,3	1,3	91,0
I do not use social media	14	9,0	9,0	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

As seen in Table 3, the majority of respondents - 133 of them or 85.8% said that they are on the social network *Facebook,* 3.9% are on *Twitter*, while 1.3% are on *My Space*. Fourteen respondents are not on any social media. This finding is also consistent with other studies[10] which confirm that the abovementioned networks are the most frequently used ones not only in Serbia but also globally. In Serbia, more than 2 million people have Facebook accounts.

Table 4 Time spent on social media every day

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Almost all day	16	10,3	10,3	10,3
5-6 hours a day	18	11,6	11,6	21,9
2-3 hours a day	68	43,9	43,9	65,8
Around 1 hour	48	31,0	31,0	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

When asked the question "How many hours a day do you spend on social media?" the majority of high school students (43.9%) answered *between 2 and 3 hours*. When we notice that 11.6% of respondents answered that they spend between 5 and 6 hours a day on social networks, and 10.3% of them almost all day, the results are rather alarming and can imply different interpretations, and they might trigger other possible studies where the goal might be to investigate whether high school students are lonely, asocial or how they spend their leisure time.

Table 4 shows that 31% of the respondents said that they spent around one hour a day on social media. However, when looking back at all the other answers, as well as the age of the respondents that we included in this sample, it seems justified to doubt the previous answer given, as it was probably given since seen as socially acceptable. When setting the goals of this research paper, we decided to investigate how frequently the high school students use social media to keep themselves informed. We started from the assumption that for this age group social media are the main source of information.

Table 5 Reasons why social media are used

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Because their peers use them	115	74,2	74,2	74,2
Keep informed	13	8,4	8,4	82,6
Study	15	9,7	9,7	92,3
Meet other people	7	4,5	4,5	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

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[10] See: a) http://www.telegraf.rs/hi-tech/2369838-luda-statistika-koliko-ljudi-u-srbiji-ima-telefon-koliko-kompjuter-a-koliko-nema-pojma-sta-je-internet, visited on 7/9/2017

b) https://www.srbijadanas.com/biz/vesti/broj-korisnika-blizu-dve-milijarde-skocio-profit-fejsbuka-2017-05-04, visited on 7/9/2017

We can see in Table 5 that almost three quarters of the respondents provided the answer that the primary reason they are on social media is the fact these are used by their peers. Only 8.4% said they use social media to keep themselves informed, and 9.7% for learning. On the other hand, 4.5% said they use social media to meet new people. It seems justified to conclude that high school students are digitally literate, which is testified by their use of the Internet, as well as the use of digital technology and platforms, however, media illiteracy is also observed. We can conclude from this finding that the respondents do not have enough knowledge about social media, both about their advantages and opportunities, and about the dangers in the virtual world.

Table 6 The frequency of information seeking via social media

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Every day	91	58,7	58,7	58,7
2-3 times a week	33	21,3	21,3	80,0
Occasionally	26	16,8	16,8	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

Table 6 shows the answers to the question: How frequently do you seek information on social media? From 155 respondents, 91 of them, that is, 58.7% said they did this every day, 33 of them said they did this 2 to 3 times a week, while 26 of them said that they did this occasionally, and 5 respondents claimed they were not on social media, thus, they did not seek for information in that way.

Table 7 Frequency of searching for information on social media
under the influence of your friends' posts

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Every day	109	70,3	70,3	70,3
Sometimes	22	14,2	14,2	84,5
Rarely	11	7,1	7,1	91,6
Never	8	5,2	5,2	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

As shown in Table 7, the answers to this question were as follows: more than 70% of the respondents said that this happens to them every day, while only 8 respondents, or 5.2%, said that their friends' posts never make them seek for information on social media, internet portals and the Internet in general. The goal of our research was to also investigate whether high school students trust the information and knowledge obtained through social media. The premise was the opinion that this age group tends to trust the accuracy of the information they receive through social media. We checked this by asking the respondents two questions.

Table 8 The level of trust in the information obtained through social media

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Completely	27	17,4	17,4	17,4
Mostly believe	76	49,0	49,0	66,4
Do not trust at all	26	16,8	16,8	83,2
Very little	21	13,6	13,6	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

Table 8 shows the answers to this question by the 155 respondents. The majority of high school students, that is, 49% trust most of the information they see on social media. 17.4% of the respondents completely trust such information, 13.6 of them very little, while 16.8% of the respondents do not trust such information at all. These results indicate that high school students trust the information they obtain in this way. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to us to check whether they check this type information from other sources or they see it as valid without any additional checks.

Table 9 Frequency of checking information obtained through social networks

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	98	63,2	63,2	63,2
No	52	33,6	33,6	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

The results shown in Table 9 indicate that as many as two thirds of the respondents, that is, 63.2% check the information they obtained on social media, while one third of them, or 33.6% believe there is no need to check such information and they trust it without any additional checks. The last research goal for our research paper was to investigate whether the respondents use the information obtained through social media to communicate with their peers. Our premise was that this type of information was very significant for peer-to-peer communication. We investigated this by using four research questions.

Table 10 The value of information obtained through social media for communication

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Necessary	50	32,3	32,3	32,3
Insignificant	36	23,2	23,2	55,5
Neither	64	41,3	41,3	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

One third of the respondents, that is, 32.3% stated that the information obtained via social media was necessary for them. On the other hand, 41.3% of them said such

information was of no significant importance to them, while one quarter of the high school students, that is, 21.2% said they found such information insignificant.

Table 11 Frequency of commenting on social media posts

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
A few times a day	54	34,9	34,9	34,9
Once a month	33	21,3	21,3	56,2
Very rarely	63	40,6	40,6	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

Table 11 shows the answers to this question. More than 40% of the respondents said that they comment on social media posts very rarely, more than a third of them, or 34.9% do this a few times a day, while 21.3% of the respondents comment on social media posts once a month.

Table 12 The frequency of adopting role models and idols on social media

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	71	45,8	45,8	45,8
No	79	51,0	51,0	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

When asked whether they adopt role models or idols on social media, a little bit more than a half of the respondents, or 51%, said No; however, the fact that 45% of the respondents said yes is a very alarming percentage.

Table 13 The frequency of posting personal opinions on social media

Valid	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
A few times a day	54	34,9	34,9	34,9
Once a month	33	21,3	21,3	56,2
Very rarely	63	40,6	40,6	96,8
I do not use social media	5	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	155	100,0	100,0	

As seen in Table 13, 57.4% of the respondents said that they post personal opinions two or three times a week, 22% of them do this regularly every day, while 17.4% of the respondents do this occasionally but very rarely. This can be considered to be a positive fact, considering that we see personal opinion as a positive personality trait. However, the questions do not ask further what the students actually see as personal opinions, since the motivational quotes and quotes by some writers and public figures are seen as personal opinions by many users of social media.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this modern mediatized society, online media, digital platforms and social media have become a part of the social reality - just like car or television. The digital age man, thanks to an increasingly advanced technology and access to the Internet, has become the "slave" of the media and digital platforms. "Digital Natives" use the worldwide knowledge available to them through the worldwide network now and immediately, by multitasking. The availability of worldwide knowledge, experiences and skills to the generations born after 1982 gives them an abundance of the almost unimaginable possibilities for creativity and freedom of thought. In this digital age, "the classroom" of knowledge is all around us, offering the most diverse knowledge and information that the user chooses from, adopts and uses based on his/her interests. For example, nowadays, you can hardly imagine a day without visiting one of the social media pages, listening to your favourite music on YouTube, or reading news via an application on an Android phone. The availability of information provided by the internet, as well as its easy and quick transfer to all users, primarily through social networks, has significantly affected the very education - in its broadest sense - which has truly become virtual, and that is a fact. There is almost no generation that has not adopted the habit to spend leisure time on one of the digital platforms. However, all indicators show that social media and the Internet in general, are mostly used by teenagers, that is, high school students all around the world. Serbian teenagers do not differ at all from their peers in any European country or America. "Due to the well-known socio-political circumstances from the last decade of the previous century, the process of the overall informatization, that is, digitalization, in our country started with a significant delay than in the developed countries, and it first appeared in its rudimentary forms" (Božić, 2014, 236). Snežana Božić (2014) further emphasizes that the intensive informatization of society is present in all its forms and in all social subsystems in Serbia nowadays. This is exactly what our research findings confirm. All the 155 respondents use the Internet, while as many as 140 use the social media. Most of the respondents among high school students have an account and are active on Facebook (133 of them), and almost half of the students are active on this popular network for two to three hours every day. This proved our assumption that high school students spend more time on social networks to be correct. Another assumption of ours proved to be true during the research - young people see social media as sources of information. Even though only 10% of the respondents said that they were keeping themselves informed through social networks, the answers to other questions showed that the real number of those who search for information via social media was actually far greater. Namely, more than half of the respondents stated that they were searching for information via these every day, while almost 70% of them claimed that their friends' posts triggered them to look up some specific information that captured their attention. The research we have done for the purpose of our paper has shown that most respondents (49%) trust most of the information they see on social media. A positive finding was that almost two thirds of the students check the information that is posted on these media. Nevertheless, as it turned out during the research, the information learnt in this way is significant in peer-to-peer communication. On one hand, they were fairly divided when they expressed their opinion about the importance of information learnt via social networks, but on the other hand, when asked about the importance of such information, a

third of the respondents considered them as necessary, a large majority of them believe such information is not of special significance but it is worthwhile reading it, while for a quarter of them such information is of no importance. Nicholas Carr warns about the growing inability to read carefully and to be focused on what one is reading, as well as to think deeply and creatively because we are almost constantly online, on the Internet which "does not give us information in a carefully balanced way, but it rather gives us a bunch of information which fragments our concentration" (Carr, 2013, 113). Around 40% of the respondents comment on the posts by their virtual friends, but rarely. Unlike this group, a third of the high school students said they did it several times a day. More than a half of the respondents do not adopt the idols and role models through social networks, but we cannot overlook the fact that 45% of them still said that it is precisely in the virtual world of social media that they find idols and role models. A vast majority of the 155 students from The First High School of Kragujevac and The First Technical School in Kragujevac post personal opinions two or three times a week. It is these findings that corroborate our assumption that we have formulated in the fourth research goal that the information adopted through social media is very important for the social life of high school students that we covered in this research.

Today's teenagers are growing up in a way that no other generation has ever experienced before, having virtually unlimited possibilities of having information at their fingertips (Johnson, 2011). In the last decade, social networks have occupied the greatest attention of all generations, compared to all other possibilities offered by the new technologies, which is confirmed by various studies and official statistics. Unstoppable development and expansion, as well as an increasing number of users have recognized the social media as the media of this modern generation. What role and how much influence the digital age media will have on our lives and the lives of our children seems to depend on whether we will properly interpret media content and whether we will know how to transfer the acquired knowledge to the new generations in the right way. We should not forget the fact that old problems always come from the low levels of human development, while new problems come from a higher level of human development and that civilization develops and advances through the process of overcoming the old problems and confrontation with new problems. Therefore, the usage of virtual reality in learning will not solve all learning-related problems, but it will help to solve some of the existing problems or at least minimize them" (Pavlović, 2017, 148). In order to achieve this, it is necessary to have digitally literate citizens as well as media literate generations with a clear critical awareness of the content they adopt through social networks. According to Kovačević (2006, 525-534), media literacy implies the ability to consume and critically think about information obtained through the mass media, as well as to acquire theoretical knowledge of the media and mass communications, and to have the ability to understand and analyze media messages, their historical, political, sociological and cultural implications, as well as to understand how media can be used and misused. At high-school age, the influence of the media is very significant, which is why it is necessary to work on the development of critical thinking, especially when it comes to information coming from the media. Therefore, it is emphasized that the question should be asked whether the adolescents are media literate, especially whether they critically evaluate and question media content (Maksimović, Stanisavljević, Petrović, 2014). And this, so to say, micro research we have conducted for the purpose of our research paper has indicated the

need to increase media literacy of young people, and this should not be done sporadically but rather systematically.

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DRUŠTVENE MREŽE „UČIONICA" DIGITALNOG DOBA

Rad ima za cilj da ispita učestalost korišćenja društvenih mreža od strane srednjoškolaca u Srbiji, kao i da li se posredstvom mreža informišu i stiču neformalna znanja, odnosno obrazuju se. U vezi sa predmetom postavljeno je više istraživačkih ciljeva. Uzorak istraživanja činilo je 155 učenika „Prve kragujevačke gimnazije" i „Prve tehničke škole" u Kragujevcu, od prve do četvrte godine. Od toga 86 dečaka (55,5 odsto) i 69 devojčica (44,5 odsto). Za potrebe istraživanja posebno je konstruisan upitnik sa 13 ajtema sa ponuđenim odgovorima na različite fenomene koje ispitujemo. Prilikom istraživanja primenili smo deskriptivnu statistiku. Nalazi istraživanja upućuju da srednjoškolci u Srbiji sve više provode vremena na društvenim mrežama, pre svega na Facebooku (od 155 ispitanika 133) koji im je u isto vreme i izvor informisanja. Poverenje informacijama stečenim na ovaj način poverava 49 odsto i one su im značajne u vršnjačkoj komunikaciji. Iako više od polovine ispitanika ne usvaja uzore, idole ili modele vrednosti posredstvom mreža ipak se 45 odsto od ipsitanih izjasnilo da upravo to čini. Takođe, istraživanje je pokazalo i da lične stavove posredstvom postova iskazuje najveći broj ispitivanih učenika i to sa stepenom učestalosti dva do tri puta nedeljno.

Ključne reči: *društvene mreže, digitalno doba, srednjoškolci, informisanje*.