

Article

Need for Technologically Non Mediated Media in a Digital Age

Vurity Mounika¹, Challa Ramakrishna², P Bobby Vardhan³

¹Lecturer, Dr. Lankapalli Bullayya College, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

²Chairman, ³Professor (Retd.), Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24321/2349.2872.202104>

I N F O

Corresponding Author:

Ramakrishna Challa, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

E-mail Id:

ramkchalla@gmail.com

Orcid Id:

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7422-0434>

How to cite this article:

Mounika V, Ramakrishna C, Vardhan PB. Need for Technologically Non Mediated Media in a Digital Age. *J Adv Res Humani Social Sci* 2021; 8(3): 12-15.

Date of Submission: 2021-09-03

Date of Acceptance: 2021-09-20

A B S T R A C T

Communication in the 21st century is canopied with digital screens. Most of the conversations be it at the workplace or in personal environments are happening through digital platforms. With growing digitalisation, the need for non-mediated media is being felt. This study is aimed at analysing the digital time of internet users and to understand their perception towards the need for non-mediated media to provide them relief from digital gadgets. The study also observes the presence of any relation between digital time of respondents and their perception towards non-mediated media as a welcome relief from digital screens.

Keywords: Interactive Media, Digitalisation, Digital Time

Need for Technologically Non-Mediated Media in a Digital Age

Life in the second millennium is not complete without technology. Digital gadgets have conquered a place in almost all professional and personal spaces leaving no scope for non-digital existence. Work in every walk of life is now mostly paper-less. From digital classrooms to digital marketing, almost everything is digital. Communication, one of the key elements of any society, has also become digitalised. Unlike other forms of media, digital media gives scope for all four types of communication i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, group as well as mass communication. One can maintain a personal journal on digital platforms giving no access to others or one can announce or state one's opinion for anyone and everyone to read or watch. With digital gadgets taking precedence over traditional forms

across all walks of life, the period that we live in can be called a digital period or digital age.

Like every other traditional stream, mass media also has greatly moved to digital technologies. Print media, foreseeing a decline in their circulations have gradually digitalised their contents. Currently, there is a digital page for almost every print newspaper or periodical in the country. Scores of purely digital news platforms are coming up to vie with the print-to-digital publications. Television channels have also started airing their content live on internet-based video streaming applications and are also providing recorded data-base for future use. Mainstream mass media, thus, is catering to digital users in a bid to retain its circulations and viewers.

Contrary to mainstream mass media, microblogging platforms have come up to provide scope for any random

internet user to mass communicate their ideas. Mass communication, a luxury, which was for many years held only by mainstream media houses, is now distributed equally among all internet users. News need not be nosed, filtered and moulded by mainstream media personnel anymore. These microblogging platforms are becoming a source for news. Trending stories can be found continuously brewing on these websites. Mainstream media has to only pick up these viral stories and publish them as news.

Besides, mass and group communication, interpersonal communication has also fallen under the canopy of digitalisation. Social media can be considered to be the most used tool for interpersonal communication in the 21st century (Ali & Kootbodien, 2017). Person-to-person communication is mostly taking place through digital filters with less scope for non-mediated conversations. Thus, right from intrapersonal to mass communication, all types of communications are taking place through digital screens. In this wake, there seems to be a rise in need for technologically non-mediated forms of communication. There is an underlying desire for live, participatory, flexible, adaptable, cost-effective, most importantly un-filtered media platforms. This need can be seen in the gradual growth of such live media forms like stand-up comedies, open-mics, street theatres, stage-plays, road-shows, oral storytelling formats etc.

Literature Review

In a study on non-digital social interactions among Americans, it was identified that the non-digital social interaction time for Americans declined from 2003 to 2017. This trend is significantly seen in young adults and adolescents who are spending more time on digital interactions than non-digital interactions (Twenge & Spitzberg, 2020).

Children born in the second millennium, especially in the second decade of the second millennium are more exposed to digital screens. Parents, with no other options left to control their children, tend to silence them with digital gadgets. This is an alarming trend that might clip the creativity and imagination among children. (Kucirkova et al., 2017)

Digital platforms, however, are augmenting the connectivity among individuals which is not possible through non-digital media. Once connected, the need for building an acquaintance through non-digital spaces has become a task to be addressed. Most of the acquaintances in the digital age are purely digital with negligent or in many cases no non-digital social relations. Young internet users are thus struggling between digital and non-digital spaces (Campbell, 2018).

Research Methodology

A study was conducted to understand the perspective of

internet users towards the need for non-mediated media like stand-ups and open-mics. The research problem was to study if indeed a need is felt for the rise of technologically non-mediated media in a digital age.

Three research objectives were identified:

- To study the average digital time of internet users
- To understand the perception of internet users towards the need for non-mediated media to provide relief from digital gadgets
- To analyse the impact of digital time and other demographic factors on the perception towards the need for non-mediated media

The study is descriptive in nature. It merely studies the perception of respondents towards the need for non-mediated media in a digital age. It does not claim any causal relations between digital usage and rise of non-mediated media as such. The population for the study has been chosen as young, educated internet users as the effects of digitalisation can be well studied with youngsters and the particular study could be done only with educated respondents as data collection took place online. Snowball sampling method was used for choosing the sample. Online survey method was used for data collection. A questionnaire was meticulously designed to comprise the parameters under consideration. A total of 325 valid responses were received for the study. They were coded and analysed to answer the research problem.

Data Findings

The demographic profile of the respondents has been recorded as follows. Responses were collected from respondents of 16 years to 35 years age group. The respondents have been divided into four age groups viz., 16-20, 21-25, 26-30, 30-35.

Majority of the responses were received from the 21-25 age group (40.12%) followed by 26 - 30 (30.25%) and 31-35 (21.30%) followed by 16-20 (8.33%).

Majority of the respondents (55.56%) were male and the rest (43.52%) were female. Less than 1% of the respondents said they prefer not to say their gender.

Table I

Age Group of the Respondents	Percentage
16 - 20	8.33%
21 - 25	40.12%
26 - 30	30.25%
31 - 35	21.30%
Grand Total	100.00%

Majority of the respondents were graduates (50.93%) or post graduates (43.21). A mere 5.86% were below graduation. This shows that the study had a clearly significant number.

Table 2

Gender of the Respondents	Percentage
Female	43.52%
Male	55.56%
Prefer not to say	0.93%
Grand Total	100.00%

Majority of the respondents belong to engineering (49.07%) followed by life sciences (17.90%), humanities and social sciences (16.36%) and commerce and management (14.51%). A mere 2.16% belong to the medical field. The high prevalence of respondents with engineering background shows the demographic profile of random internet users as well.

Table 3

Educational Qualification of the Respondents	Percentage
Below Graduation	5.86%
Graduation	50.93%
Post Graduation	43.21%
Grand Total	100.00%

Table 4

Field of Education of the Respondents	Percentage
Commerce and Management	14.51%
Engineering	49.07%
Humanities and Social Sciences	16.36%
Life Sciences	17.90%
Medicine	2.16%
Grand Total	100.00%

Digital Time of an Average Internet User

An attempt was made to identify the digital time of an average internet user. Based on the demographic profile of the respondents, it can be said that the digital time of an average educated young internet user has been analysed.

From the Table it can be identified that the majority of the respondents (58.77%) are spending nearly 1 to 5 hours a day on digital gadgets. A significant 28.92% are identified to be spending more than 5 hours in a day on digital gadgets. A mere 12.31% are spending their time on digital gadgets for less than an hour. The digital time of an average educated young internet user can be considered to be around 1 to 5 hours a day. For nearly 30% of the users it is more than 5 hours a day. A simple calculation would show that these users are spending more than 35 hours in a week with digital screens. This implies, they are spending more than two working days in a week solely on digital tools.

From the Table 5, it can be observed that digital time is more than 5 hours for the majority of the respondents from

the 16-20 age group. Age can be considered to be a factor in determining one's digital time. It can be observed that with age, the digital time of users gradually came down with the majority of the less than 1 hour users noticed from the 31-35 age group followed by the 26 - 30 age group.

From the Table 6, it can be observed that gender does not seem to impact a user's digital time. An almost similar response pattern is seen for both the genders. Likewise, no impact is seen for other parameters as well.

Table 5

Impact of Age on Digital Time of Respondents	Digital Time of Respondents			
	1 hour to 5 hours	Less than 1 hour	More than 5 hours	Grand Total
16-20	44.44%	7.41%	48.15%	100.00 %
21-25	63.85%	7.69%	28.46%	100.00 %
26-30	59.18%	14.29%	26.53%	100.00 %
31-35	53.62%	20.29%	26.09%	100.00 %
Grand Total	58.64%	12.35%	29.01%	100.00 %

Table 6

Impact of Gender of respondents on their digital time	Digital Time of Respondents			
	1 hour to 5 hours	Less than 1 hour	More than 5 hours	Grand Total
Female	57.75%	14.08%	28.17%	100.00 %
Male	59.44%	11.11%	29.44%	100.00 %
Grand Total	58.70%	12.42%	28.88%	100.00 %

Relief from Digital Glare

Keeping in view the immense digital time by the respondents, they were asked if they would like to get a relief from their digital gadgets and if they think non-mediated media like stand-ups and open-mics might help them in this direction.

When asked if they think technologically non-mediated media shall give them a relief from their digital gadgets, majority of them said they do. The Table 7, shows that 40.92% of the respondents agree and 37.54% of them strongly agree to the idea thus making it more than 78% of

positive weight towards the need for non-mediated media to give relief from digital gadgets.

Table 7

Non-mediated media are a welcome relief from digital glare	Percentage
Agree	40.92%
Disagree	4.62%
Neutral	14.77%
Strongly Agree	37.54%
Strongly Disagree	2.15%
Grand Total	100.00%

Digital time of these users has been calculated to be ranging from 1 to 5 hours per day. In nearly 30% of the cases it is more than 5 hours per day.

A comparison between the digital time of the respondents and their perception towards the need for non-mediated media showed that the greater the digital time, the more intended was the perception towards such technologically non-mediated forms of communication. This shows that with growing digitalisation, the presence of live, non-mediated media shall definitely be felt and their rise shall be augmented as a necessity to balance the digitalisation.

Table 8

Impact of digital time of respondents on their perspective towards non-mediated media as a relief from digital glare	Digital Time of Respondents			
	1 hour to 5 hours	Less than 1 hour	More than 5 hours	Grand Total
Non-mediated media are a welcome relief from digital glare				
Agree	44.50%	47.50%	30.85%	40.92%
Disagree	6.81%	2.50%	1.06%	4.62%
Neutral	10.99%	25.00%	18.09%	14.77%
Strongly Agree	34.55%	22.50%	50.00%	37.54%
Strongly Disagree	3.14%	2.50%		2.15%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

From the Table 8, it can be observed that half of the respondents who spend more than 5 hours a day on digital gadgets have strongly agreed and 30.85% have agreed that non-mediated media is necessary to provide relief from digital tools. The remaining 18.09% were neutral. There was no strong disagreement towards the idea from this population while a negligible 1.06% disagreement is seen.

This shows that digital time does seem to impact the rise in need for non-mediated media. Disagreement on a whole towards the idea was almost negligible as the whole population comprised internet users with slightly varying digital time.

Conclusion

In the digital age that we are living in, there seems to be a need to find relief from digital gadgets. We are seeing the world around us more through digital screens than through naked eye. In this wake, there is every need for the rise of technologically non-mediated media like stand-ups and open-mics to balance the growing digitalisation in the society. The study, though it is descriptive in nature, sheds enough light in this direction. Based on the study it was identified that young educated internet users perceive that there is a need for the rise of non-mediated media to give them relief from their digital screens.

References

1. Ali MSS, Kootbodien A. The Effectiveness of WhatsApp as an Interpersonal Communication Medium among Abu Dhabi University Students. *International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communications* 2017; 3(1): 11-19. <https://www.arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijmjm/v3-i1/2.pdf>
2. Campbell P. Occupy, Black Lives Matter and Suspended Mediation: Young People's Battles for Recognition in/ between Digital and Non-digital Spaces. Young. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1103308817713584>
3. Kucirkova N, Littleton K, Kyparissiadis A. The influence of children's gender and age on children's use of digital media at home. *British Journal of Education Technology* 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12543>
4. Twenge JM, Spitzberg BH. Declines in non-digital social interaction among Americans. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 2020. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jasp.12665>