

Generational News Accessing in a New Media Landscape

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Abstract:

Our contemporary media landscape has undergone tremendous change, which has had great influence on the different ways news media are publishing their news. Print and broadcast media have become accompanied by digital news provisioning through computers, mobile devices and tablets. Consequently there are general shifts in the ways people are accessing news. These shifts presumably vary significantly among different generations, although there is currently limited research available that evidence that. Furthermore, with a more diverse news media landscape a number of different news accessing patterns have emerged, in which print, computers, mobile devices and tablets are used in various combinations and non-combinations. The theoretical approach of the paper is situated in the research traditions focusing displacement and complementary effects, which is used for a focused and empirical analysis of news accessing patterns among different generations in Sweden.

The aim is to describe and explain the interplay of print, online mobile and tablets in contemporary news consumption among different generations in 2011. The analysis utilizes a postal-based survey project conducted in Sweden during the fall of 2011. 6000 questionnaires were distributed to representative sample of Swedes aged 16-85 years. The survey project has been conducted by the SOM-institute at University of Gothenburg every year since 1986. The findings evidence that Swedes generally access evening tabloids only online or only in print, but also that there is a growing form of cross-media news consumption. The differences between older and younger generations when it comes to utilizing mobile devices and tablets for news accessing are striking.

Keywords: Cross-media use, single-media use, complementary, displacement

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