



Digital uses to promote democratic experiences

Usos digitales para la promoción de experiencias democráticas

Usos digitais para a promoção de experiências democráticas

INTRODUCTION

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Abstract:

This monograph invites to reflect and deepen on the different social and educational impacts that have been generated in the process of interaction between technology and democracy. It does so through six articles that share the same axis: reflecting on the different processes that occur in different virtual environments, their link (or not) with democracy and the analysis of the social and educational impacts that are (or not) generated in these participatory spaces. Linking technology and digital democracy implies talking about a wide range of scenarios in which different actors, content, strategies, types of participation, power relations, among many other elements interact. It is in this diversity of areas, elements, actors and effects that this monograph focuses on. The set of articles that we present show how technology and digital democracy interact in different contexts (global and local) and what types of impacts (social, political and personal; positive and negative; etc.) this interaction can generate.

KEYWORDS

Democracy, Participation, Information and Communication Technology, Educational Technology.

Resumen:

El monográfico invita a reflexionar y profundizar sobre los diferentes impactos sociales y educativos que se han generado en el proceso de interacción entre tecnología y democracia. Y lo hace a través de seis artículos, que comparten un mismo eje: reflexionar sobre los distintos procesos que se producen en diferentes entornos

virtuales, su (no) vinculación con la democracia y el análisis de los impactos sociales y educativos que (no) se generan en estos espacios participativos. Vincular tecnología y democracia digital implica hablar de un amplio abanico de escenarios en los que interactúan diferentes actores, contenidos, estrategias, tipos de participación, relaciones de poder, entre muchos otros elementos. Es en esta diversidad de ámbitos, elementos, actores y efectos en la que se centra el presente monográfico. El conjunto de artículos que presentamos nos muestran como tecnología y democracia digital interactúan en distintos contextos (globales y locales); y qué tipos de impactos (sociales, políticos y personales; positivos y negativos; etc.) puede generar esta interacción.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Democracia, Participación, Tecnologías de la información y la comunicación, Tecnología de la educación.

Resumo

Esta edição convida a refletir e aprofundar sobre os diferentes impactos sociais e educacionais que têm sido gerados no processo de interação entre tecnologia e democracia. E o faz por meio de seis artigos que compartilham o mesmo eixo: refletir sobre os diferentes processos que ocorrem nos diferentes ambientes virtuais, sua (não) vinculação com a democracia e a análise dos impactos sociais e educacionais que (não) são gerados nesses espaços participativos. Vincular tecnologia e democracia digital implica falar sobre uma ampla gama de cenários nos quais interagem diferentes atores, conteúdos, estratégias, formas de participação, relações de poder, entre tantos outros elementos. É nesta diversidade de áreas, elementos, atores e efeitos que esta edição se concentra. O conjunto de artigos que apresentamos mos-

tra-nos como a tecnologia e a democracia digital interagem em diferentes contextos (global e local); e que tipos de impactos (sociais, políticos e pessoais; positivos e negativos; etc.) esta interação pode gerar.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Democracia, Participação, Tecnologias de informação e comunicação, Tecnologia educacional.

Beyond the official definition of democracy as a political system, John Dewey already stated a century ago that democracy is, above all, a horizon of life in common where people live the experience of facing challenges, conflicts and complexities of everyday life, together. In this vision of democracy, the objective is not to get rid of others understood as a barrier, as an annoyance or as a simple instrument of own individual fulfillment, but to co-construct with others a new reality in common, shared, diverse, more equitable, fairer and freer. Today, the different online environments have become an integral, daily and significant part of the lives of individuals, families, groups and societies. In this monograph, we ask ourselves about the role of these various digital environments as facilitators or impediments of experiences of authentic democracy.

Specifically, this monograph raises different questions and unresolved challenges, all of them linked to the digital sphere and the concept of democracy. The set of articles presented provide reflections and analysis from perspectives related to digital participation from a broad perspective (such as social and political participation), to more specific perspectives (such as participation in educational contexts). In addition, the articles in the monograph also offer us theoretical and empirical approaches that analyze how the digital world is evolving

more and more as a participatory space and, at the same time, how participation spaces have been increasingly digitized. The monograph invites to reflect and deepen on the different social and educational impacts that have been generated in the process of interaction between technology and democracy. It does so through six articles that share the same axis: reflect on the different democratic processes that occur in different virtual environments and describe the social and educational impacts that are generated in these participatory spaces.

In the first article entitled “Digital technologies, big data and ideological (neoliberal) fantasies: threats to democratic efforts in education?”, Dion Rüsselbæk reflects on the phenomena linked to digital technologies and big data, and on the impacts that these generate in democracy in the educational context. It does so by using the work of Jacques Rancière, Slavoj Žižek, and Giorgio Agamben. In the article, the author indicates that a form of instrumental power based on digital technology and supported by neoliberal ideological fantasies tends to eliminate or exclude certain democratic aspects of education.

Next, in the article “Democratize digital school governance: action research results”, by Mar Beneyto-Seoane and Jordi Collet-Sabé, the results of a doctoral thesis are presented. The

educational impact generated by the democratization of participatory and digital processes introduced in the school context and in the educational community is described. The main results of the research show us that democratizing school digital participation modifies school power relations, can increase spaces for digital participation, improves the digital competence of the different members of the school community, and can contribute to reducing the digital and educational divide.

Raquel Tarullo, in her article "Informative habits and online participation: a study about young undergraduates in Argentina", analyzes quantitatively and qualitatively the information habits of university students in Argentina. The intention of the study is to determine the sources of news consumption of young people, and the use of the interaction tools of social networks. The most relevant study results describe the information stages of the students, their digital information environments and the habits or uses that they develop in the digital context.

In the following article, "Engagement between politicians and followers on Facebook. The case of the 2016 general elections in Spain", Susana Miquel-Segarra, Amparo López-Meri and Nadia Viounnikoff-Benet mainly raise the type of interactions and engagement that some Spanish political parties generate on Facebook, the differences in interaction according to the type of content that political parties and candidates publish on Facebook, and the role of hashtags and mentions in the posts they publish on this social network. The main results show that, although there are significant levels of digital interaction, the degree of engagement is low.

Continuing with the thread of digital uses in the framework of political parties, Célia Belim in her article entitled "Has the digital environment

been democratized?", presents us with an analysis on how digital political communication influences democratic rules. Specifically, the article focuses on studying the digital uses in social networks and in the non-electoral period of government and opposition parties of various countries with full democracy and imperfect democracy in Europe and in the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP). The main results of the study show differences in digital paradigms, objectives, content and uses between opposition parties and government parties.

To close the monograph, Cristian Castillo in his article "Simplicity in public administration and improvement of democracy" analyzes the digital experience of the government of Ecuador in relation to its public policy. To do so, the article reflects on the concept of democracy and its quality. Specifically, the study shows the impact of the implementation of digital strategies and channels on administrative procedures and processes. The main results of the research show that the use of digital media could help improve the quality of a substantive democracy.

To close this issue of the journal, two miscellaneous articles are presented. In the first, entitled "Netflix as an audiovisual producer: a snapshot of the serial fiction co-productions", Tatiana Hidalgo links the technological phenomenon derived from the streaming of the NETFLIX platform and its cultural dimension. That is, the audiovisual platform's way of producing and the user's way of consuming. Specifically, the study reveals the current importance of recognizing the supply-demand strategy applied by the large audiovisual platform NETFLIX. Another relevant aspect of the article is the description of this strategy, from which we highlight

some results such as that the co-production of serial fictions on the platform that manages to involve more participants in the creative process, lowers costs, enhances the development of local fiction and gives importance to minority markets, among others.

The second article in the miscellany (and the last article in this issue of the *Obra Digital Journal*), is entitled "Participatory learning contexts in secondary school: from presential education to virtuality". In this article, framed in the thesis of Laura Farré-Riera, it is proposed how to conceptualize the participation of students in secondary education, what aspects condition the participation of students in the school context and what elements should be considered in a non-presential educational context or, in other words, in an online format. A main aspect high-

lighted by the author is that, despite the fact that there is a certain belief that the modality (presential or virtual) determines the active participation of the students, in reality this participation is strongly conditioned by the pedagogical model that exists in the educational center.