A proposal for the formation of a critical and active Digital Citizenship
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Abstract.

Faced with the liberal tradition of the exercise of citizenship, mere observers of obligations and individualists, is the republican tradition that emphasizes citizenship for participation and the defense of the common good. Placing ourselves in the digital sphere and from the republican paradigm, the digital citizen would be a person who exercises his or her rights on the Internet from ethical and critical principles consistent with political activism, in order to promote social change. The aim of this work is to make a proposal to educate a critical digital citizenship, committed, active and involved in online actions and intertwined within the educational process. To this end, we start from the profile and needs of digital citizenship that characterize university students (n=250) and that has been evaluated through the Digital Citizenship Scale of Choi, Glassman and Cristol (2017). The results show young university students with high technical and digital skills who also make frequent use of digital devices to carry out academic and more personal activities. However, the profile is clearly deficient in those aspects that have to do with observing a critical perspective and political activism in the digital field or cyberactivism.

Keywords: cyberactivism, education for digital citizenship, university, citizen participation
1 Introduction

The concept of citizenship changes significantly depending on whether the approach is republican or liberal. The liberal approach understands citizenship in an individualistic way, they are citizens who must respect and know the laws without any more space for negotiation and/or public management. On the other hand, the republican conception bases citizenship in the active commitment in the institutions and obligations towards the community, thus the participation becomes an inherent value or virtue to the citizen in its triple condition of reflexive, critical and deliberative (Quesada, 2008). The greater weight that the latter approach has gained has led to the current rise and importance of education for citizenship (Rubio, 2007).

From a republican perspective, education for citizenship must not be limited to an education focused on the knowledge of their rights, or even to an education for citizenship that remains in civism or strictly correct behavior or minimum respect for the other. In this sense, the socio-political theory of Jürgen Habermas (1998) considers the school as part of civil society, where education for citizenship would be based on values such as emancipation, free dialogue, and democratic and active commitment in the community (Terrén & Fernández, 1999). Thus, civic education has an ethical rather than instrumental character or, to put it another way, it is not a mere civic education but, rather, an education for active citizenship and values, where theory and practice, critical vision and responsible commitment are linked (De Paz, 2007).

In this way Cortina (2018), summarizes in two the essential characteristics of citizenship, critical and active: it assumes the need to consider and reflect on motives of rational convictions and positions, with a critical disposition and willing to assume criticisms, and agrees to claim rights and freedoms, but also willing to assume the responsibilities that derive from it and to participate in common life.

Thus understood, digital citizenship would be a broader concept of how it is treated by various texts that frame it, almost exclusively, in the maintenance of correct behavior in the field of new technologies, the Internet and the different services it offers to users. Similarly, we share the idea recently put forward by Cortina (2018), which points out that in the face of technological advances it is important to build a digital citizenship at the service of the self-employed as the great challenge of our era.

1.1 Education for a Digital Citizenship (EDC)

Today's young people, defined as "digital residents" by authors such as Monreal et al. (2017), maintain a totally normalized way of acting on the Internet that facilitates their participation, the production of knowledge and learning and the creation of social support from different collectives (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018; González-Patiño & Esteban- Guitart, 2014). Area et al. (2015), characterize young millennials as technologically equipped, multitasking, mobile, interactive, technologically emancipated, autonomous, having fun in the digital, needing to relate to others and exposed to new risks. We thus understand that the formation of digital
natives must be approached in an integral way as it is composed of different factors or fields (Kim & Choi, 2018; Choi, 2016).

In summary, the good practices in EDC would include features such as the following: respond to identified and concrete needs (Aristizábal & Cruz, 2018; Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018; Kim & Choi, 2018; Maier, 2012); It is essential that they combine activities in the digital world with activities in the local context (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018; González-Patiño et al. 2017), in order to make sense of EDC; the EDC can be incorporated from different curricular areas (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018; O’Brien, 2010); in this way, they allow productive practices of hybrid education with contributions from diverse contexts and cultures around the planet (Pedersen et al., 2018).

The responsibility for developing formal EDC proposals that go beyond digital literacy and incorporate the demands, needs and possibilities of the virtual must inevitably be assumed from the educational sphere at all levels. Thus, educational centers should be oriented to train in the integral and civic use of communication technologies, since it is a privileged space from which to teach how to discuss and seek consensus in the virtual (Hernández, 2013) and from which to implement methodologies that develop digital competence with a participatory and democratic perspective (Culver & Jacobson, 2012).

According to Emejulu & McGregor (2016), EDC should facilitate understanding of social, economic and environmental inequalities. This presupposes an approach to digital space understood as a context that is not absent from the power play that is developed at a real level, which will imply the development of emancipatory practices and technologies. Transferring this to the educational sphere implies training for a global, democratic and empowering citizenship that reactivates civil society in contexts of analysis and deliberation that fight for social justice and human development (Gozálvez & Contreras, 2014), with the Internet being an outstanding space for political and civic citizenship (Hepburn, 2012), in which educators have the responsibility of teaching students to manage social networks as a tool that contributes to social change (La Riviere et al., 2012).

Thus, Education for Digital Citizenship should not be confined to a subsection of digital literacy, let alone identify with it. On the contrary, digital literacy or the attainment of digital competence or skills should be considered a dimension of digital citizenship (Lozano & Fernández, 2018). Global EDC goes beyond the teaching of online security, seeking to train and engage students to give them the skills and competencies they need to be critical and active citizens in the digital realm, i.e. to promote resilience to the challenges of the information society (Reynolds & Scott, 2016).

Los objetivos de este trabajo sería por un lado mostrar el perfil de ciudadanía digital de una muestra de jóvenes universitarios y por otro hacer una propuesta de educación de la ciudadanía digital en aquellos aspectos que resultan ser más deficitarios.

2 Digital Citizenship Profile of young university students

The study for the establishment of this profile is developed in a previous work by Lozano-Diaz & Fernández-Prados (2019), on a sample of students from the University of Almeria (n=250). For the evaluation the Digital Citizenship Scale of Choi et al. (2017), was used, this
instrument allows to measure skills, perceptions and levels of participation of young adults in Internet-based communities. It is a scale developed considering four large sections that would constitute the construct of digital citizenship (Choi, 2016):

- Digital Ethics. It refers to an appropriate, safe, ethical and responsible conduct with respect to the activities carried out on the Internet.

- Media literacy. This section refers to the ability to access, create and evaluate information and communicate online with others.

- Participation/Involvement. It involves various forms of online involvement such as political participation, socio-economic participation, cultural participation and personal involvement.

- Critical resistance. It is a section with a more radical approach than the previous one. According to Choi (2016), it means developing actions that question the status quo and fight for social justice. This implies, on the one hand, the critical recognition of power structures, and on the other, it refers to the political activism that allows to question and combat inequalities through digital social networks.

From here Choi et al. (2017), develop the Digital Citizenship Scale that is composed of 26 items and 5 factors:

1) Political activism on the Internet (9 items)
2) Technical skills (4 items)
3) Local/global awareness (2 items)
4) Critical Approach (7 items) and
5) Communicative activism (4 items).

The questionnaire was completed with questions on the relationship of students with the Internet and information and communication technologies (use-frequency, place, device and purpose).

The results made it possible to establish the following Digital Citizenship profile in this sample of young university students:

- have had full access to the Internet for a long time, as well as daily use and high digital competence.
- the main device used to manage the network of networks is the mobile.
- the predominant purpose is to visit social networks as opposed to university work or entertainment.
- the purpose of searching for information or news is last.
- They have high "technical skills".
- The level of "political activism on the Internet" is at a considerable distance from the other dimensions.

From the finding of this profile we can conclude about the need to develop good educational practices that favor the involvement in political actions on the Internet or cyberactivism in
which teachers act as a bridge with the present to achieve the interest of students (Culver & Jacobson, 2012), incorporating the constructs of critical digital citizenship in everyday educational practices (Xu et al., 2018), in short, connecting activism and digital media with positive social change (La Riviere et al., 2012) in what some have come to call cyberactivism or online activism (Fernández, 2012).

2.1 Proposal for Education for Active and Critical Digital Citizenship

Taking into account the results detailed in the previous point, a digital citizenship workshop was designed to develop critical digital participation among university students. In order to do this, we start from the distinction between two ways of acting in the field of politics: conventional political action and unconventional political action. According to Fernández (2012), the repercussions of the information society in these fields are different. The consequences on democracy and conventional political participation allude directly to electronic democracy (e-democracy). This consists in the use of new technologies to carry out basic processes of democracy and implies all voluntary electronic activity of citizens aimed at influencing the selection of governors or public decision making, which is channeled or produced through electronic or telematic means. It comes to include all those activities related to e-voting, virtual political parties or online parliaments. Non-conventional political action encompasses a series of very broad behaviours that do not correspond to the norms and customs defined under a particular regime; among the most important expressions would be sit-ins, blockades, camping, concentrations, demands, sabotage, marches or civil disobedience... that predominate in the realm of the new social movements as feminists, ecologists, pacifists or alternatives (Rucht, 1992). This approach to the digital sphere presupposes actions, ordered according to the model of participation proposed by Marsh (1977), of an online or cyberactivist nature, ranging from those that are less committed, complex and risky, such as those related to clickactivism or to an online signature or petition, to those that involve the development of behaviors linked to hacktivism that border on legality, such as DDoS attacks, Mail Bombing, etc.

From here a gradation of cyberactivism proposals was established for the workshop on critical and active digital citizenship. As a previous step, students were offered a broad overview of social and political casuistry that would allow them to get a general and current idea of demands at a global level. In this sense it was considered that the Sustainable Development Objectives (UNESCO, 2017), constitute an ideal material when dealing with themes related to the End of poverty, Zero hunger, Health and well-being, Quality education, Gender equality, Clean water and sanitation, Affordable and non-polluting energy, Decent work and economic growth, Industry, innovation and infrastructure, Reduction of inequalities, Sustainable cities and communities, Responsible production and consumption, Action for the climate, Underwater life, Life of terrestrial ecosystems, Peace, justice and solid institutions and establishment of Alliances to achieve the objectives. The students had to read the definition of each theme, as well as the figures that accompanied each of the ODS in a summarized but very illustrative way. At the same time, a series of web pages were also selected from various organizations that worked on aspects closely related to the themes presented, such as environmental groups, human rights activists, support associations for various groups, etc. The gradation of activities was made, following Marsh's proposal (1977), from minor to major implication and that applied to the online activism would be the following way:
1. Clickactivism
2. Cyberactions
3. Cybervolunteering
4. Cyberdissidence
5. Hackactivism

2.1.1 Order of development of the Workshop for Critical and Active Digital Citizenship

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<tr>
<th>Step 1. Know the Objectives of Sustainable Development</th>
<th>Web</th>
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<td>The aim is to get an idea of the most important problems worldwide. Go to the link and consult each of the Sustainable Development Objectives, the definition and purpose of each one as well as a series of very clarifying data of the state of the question at global level.</td>
<td><img src="http://www.undp.org/content/undp/es/home/sustainable-development-goals.html" alt="image" /></td>
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<th>Step 2. Develop the following activities</th>
<th>Web</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1. Actions of clickactivism You have to read, give &quot;I like&quot; and/or share causes or news on your social networks from the following websites by choosing at least one:</td>
<td><img src="https://www.ecologistasenaccion.org" alt="image" /> <img src="https://www.facebook.com/Ecologistas.en.Accion" alt="image" /> <img src="https://twitter.com/Ecologistas" alt="image" /> <img src="https://www.instagram.com/ecologistas" alt="image" /> <img src="https://www.rsf-es.org" alt="image" /> <img src="https://www.facebook.com/Reporteros-sin-fronteras-Espa%C3%B1a" alt="image" /> <img src="https://twitter.com/rsf_es" alt="image" /> <img src="https://www.save-the-children.org" alt="image" /></td>
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Activity 2. Performs a cyberaction. It consists of signing an online petition following the guidelines of pages that collect and create petitions such as the following, develops at least one action in one of the following pages.

AVAAZ
https://secure.avaaz.org/page/es

Change.org
https://www.change.org

Greenpeace
http://ciberactuacongreenpeace.es

Ecologistas en Acción (Ecologists in Action)
https://www.ecologistasenaccion.org/?cat=270

Amnesty International
https://www.es.amnesty.org/actua/acciones

Salva la Selva (Save the Jungle)
https://www.salvalaselva.org

Activity 3. Get involved as a cybervolunteer. You have to carry out one or more online volunteering actions, on pages such as the following:

Cibervoluntarios (Cybervolunteers)
https://www.cibervoluntarios.org/es

Haces falta.org (Virtual Volunteering)
https://www.hacesfalta.org/oportunidades/virtual/buscador/listado

AECC (Spanish Cancer Association)
https://www.aecc.es/es/actualidad/noticias/voluntariado-online-nueva-forma-prestar-apoyo

United Nationes (Virtual Volunteering)
https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/es
Activity 4. Develops cyber-dissidence actions
It consists of the creation of blogs to disseminate campaigns and causes, denouncing injustices and the like, as well as supporting various actions that do not fall into the previous category. Make at least one action in one of the following pages.
Empodera.Org
https://empodera.org
Create a blog to support a social or political cause or campaign
https://www.aboutespanol.com/como-crear-un-blog-en-4-pasos-sencillos-40095

Activity 5. Hackactivism actions
It refers to the non-violent use of illegal or legally ambiguous tools in pursuit of political ends (you only have to know the site, not develop actions)
http://foro.hackhispano.com/

Source: Own elaboration.

References


