

# Young people and daily life contexts of news appropriation

## Jovens e contextos quotidianos de consumo e apropriação de notícias

### Jóvenes y contextos cotidianos de consumo y apropiación de noticias

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#### ABSTRACT

This article analyses the news social circulation in the private sphere, using a sample of thirty-two young Portuguese people interviewed because they showed some form of civic participation of different types and intensities. Through news consumption and political information, we identified five profiles: Informed Consumers, Poorly Informed Consumers, Emergent Consumers of Information, Consumers in a Self-Project, and Online Consumers. These profiles revealed the significance of social and civic capitals, the importance of daily life and family environments in the habits of news consumption and an important connection to the family with the political news.

**Palavras-chave:** jovens, notícias, esfera privada, culturas cívicas, quotidiano, *habitus*.

#### RESUMO

*Este artigo centra-se na análise da circulação social da notícia em espaços privados de 32 jovens portugueses que quando foram entrevistados tinham alguma forma de participação cívica diferenciada no tipo e na intensidade. Identificaram-se cinco perfis: Consumidores informados, Consumidores pouco informados, Consumidores emergentes de informação, Consumidores em torno de um projeto do Eu e Cidadãos online. Estas tipologias revelaram a importância dos capitais sociais e cívicos, a ligação intrínseca entre a vida quotidiana e os hábitos de consumo de notícias e a importância da família no consumo de notícias, muito em especial as da esfera política.*

**Keywords:** *young people, news, private sphere, civic culture, daily life, habitus.*

#### RESUMEN

Este artículo se centra en el análisis de la circulación social de las noticias en espacios privados, de una muestra de 32 jóvenes portugueses entrevistados porque mostraban alguna forma de participación ciudadana de diversos tipos e intensidades. Se identificó cinco perfiles: Consumidores Informados, Consumidores Poco Informados, Consumidores Emergentes de Información, Consumidores en Proyecto del *Self*, y Consumidores en Línea. Estas tipologías revelan la importancia del capital social y cívico, la relación intrínseca entre la vida cotidiana y los hábitos de consumo de noticias y la importancia de la familia en el consumo de noticias, muy especialmente en la esfera política.

**Palabras clave:** jóvenes, noticias, esfera privada, cultura cívica, cotidiano, *habitus*.

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## INTRODUCTION

We still understand journalism as one of the pillars of democracy and interesting to the public (Beckett, 2008). This is true in spite of the undeniably loss of part of its historical position linking citizens, its struggle with fragilities that weaken it in front of the public and experiencing a severe economic and procedural crisis (Beckett, 2008). The multidimensions crossing between journalism and civic and youth cultures are a focus to explore. If we consider youth and journalism, currently inserted in a reconfigured and broader *media* context, it is possible to think about the news in a way that allows understanding how they can facilitate the processes of civic structure among individuals in their daily life (Buckingham, 2006 [2000]).

The particular place that news occupies in youth experiences, with an impact on the closer social contexts, such as the family - where youth socialization begins -, are potential contributions to the reinforcement of civic cultures. These cultures are faced as complex and multiform. They do not imply homogeneity between their members and their actions. They point to the various forms of participation in daily life, in civil society institutions, commitment with the public space, and involvement in political activities (Dahlgren, 2000b). In this article, we understood the *media*, particularly the news *media*, through their social contexts perspectives (Dahlgren, 2000a). That is, they affect people, but they also shape themselves through the way people appropriate, interpret and share them. In this way, we can point out the importance of the news social consumption, according to what was proposed by the Chicago School sociologist, Robert Park (2009 [1940]), when he referred to news as small communications, independent of each other, which invite to talk and to the social reaction.

This line of research is important in the multidimensional context of Latin cultures, beyond the Anglo-Saxon view and the more digitized Northern European countries. In the Portuguese context - where about a quarter of population never used the internet, a quarter does not have a connection at home, and where television is still the hegemonic *media*, although in dispute with the internet (Cardoso, Paisana, Neves, & Quintanilha, 2015; Cardoso, & Martinho, 2016; Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social [ERC], 2016)-, it is evident a notorious asymmetry in the access and use of digital media (Brites, 2015a). Additionally, there is

an ambivalence that oscillates between different forms of participation caused by the crisis and a marked influence of fifty years of dictatorship, which still places politics in the private sphere. We must not forget that Portuguese civic culture still reflects five decades of dictatorial rule (Villaverde Cabral, 2000; Cruz, 1995; Brites, 2015b). Pinto, Pereira, Pereira, and Ferreira (2011), talking about how the dictatorship impacted on the media, including education for *media*, remind that Portuguese almost had no freedom of speech and were "amplifiers of a monolithic world vision" (p. 69).

In this context, Which profiles can be found related to the news consumption in the private sphere, taking into account a sample of young with different types of participation?, Which are the spaces of conversation and news exchange in which these young people move, especially when it comes to news related to politics?

## NEWS MEDIA AND SOCIALIZATION

In societies where the presence of *media* is strong and consubstantial to its inherence to daily life, there is no homogeneity among its members and their actions, and there are spaces for the development of civic cultures, especially among young people (Dahlgren, 2000b). As the sociologist Machado Pais (2001) pointed out, "*one of the essential aspects of contemporary youth cultures derives from the antinomian logics that characterize them: sometimes rigid, uniform, coercive, others flexible, optional, and seductive. (...) These reversible and oscillatory movements are what the yo-yo metaphor helps to explain*" (pp. 68-69).

The North American researcher Doris Graber (2002) confirms the importance of the information, even in childhood and youth, as a facilitator of the transmission of knowledge which can contribute to daily decisions. Although the information may remain latent in a certain way, it may also give substrate to subsequent decisions, being especially important in children and youth socialization. To have informed citizens is an undisputed value and can contribute to reduce the decline in participation (Milner, 2009). This fact becomes more relevant considering the juvenile stages of civic and media socialization. The approach to civic and *media* education must include the politics dimension instead of excluding it. Justin Lewis (2006), points out to the need for an "informing citizens as news-value" (p. 310) and considered that more to think if the news is to entertain or to inform, we must attend to

its implications for citizenship. Susan Moeller (2012) sees constructively the possibility that literacy for the news positively affects the young people's quality of life, based on the principle that the better informed citizens will be more able to intervene. There appears to be a very positive variation between a higher educational degree and participation degrees. Ferreira e Silva (2005) expressed that "more educated young people are most active, have greater civic awareness and use more citizen rights" (p. 146).

The present, marked by the advance of digital and near-field communication technologies, includes the role of the family, which continues to be decisive in the structuring of political socialization (Graber, 2002; Brites, 2010, 2012). Studies of family contexts indicate a dynamic of traditional television that should not be ignored even in the digital age (Lemish, 2007; Ponte, 2011). The media context offers unprecedented opportunities to interact and access information that can help to improve the problems of contemporary family life (Clark, 2011). It is no longer possible to think about sociability without perceiving the surrounding media dimensions. As pointed out by Lia Pappámikail (2011), it is essential to address the impact that new technologies have had in recent decades, on the youth daily life, even taking into account that this phenomenon complicates the potential scenarios of youth interaction.

The complexities mentioned above, regarding media and family dimensions, acquire greater relevance if we consider that political socialization will affect the interaction quality between the citizens and the system, and should begin in early childhood (Graber, 2002; Patterson, 2007). Others such as the school, the *media*, and friends share the role of the family in youth socialization. However, we must not forget that aggravated social and economic conditions (financial and access to employment), and the extension of living (effectively or its perspective) at parents' home contribute to that closeness to the family space.

According to Bourdieu (1987), the cultural capital (resources, skills, and aspirations on cultural matters) transmitted by the family is cumulative and prevail as the essential hypothesis to understand, for example, differences in school performance in different social classes. The importance of these mediation factors, mainly through Internet, is an integral condition of the civic culture concept and also, a kind of civic *habitus*

(Dahlgren, 2010). Thus, we should add inevitably to the *habitus*, the individual ability to emancipate from adjacent structures, which is related to the interaction on social, rhetoric, ability to organize, build lobbies and to define what politically relevant is (Dahlgren, 2006). Theories and methodologies, linked mainly to micro processes of social life (Machado Pais, 2002), influence the sociologies of everyday life strongly. While it is true that individuals embodied the social, these are a product and produce social *habitus* (Dahlgren, 2010) is also. Appadurai (2003 [1996]) considers that politicized family relations, which often are the fuel to activate the emotions and identities, surpass Bourdieu's *habitus* (based on the reproduction of practices). Jesús Martín-Barbero (2003 [1987]) also states that one of the strategic challenges of the information society implies to think about the technological revolution and social exclusion. This strong current technological component maintains the need to study carefully different social contexts and youth experiences, kept despite a pretended horizontality of youth sociability, by a technological democratization idea.

## METHODOLOGIES AND OPTIONS

In this research<sup>1</sup>, we choose to apply qualitative methodologies, considering that they are most adapted to understand the speeches, attitudes and subjective positions of daily life. In Portugal, quantitative methods guided, exclusively or almost exclusively, the research of youth studies, both in the study on participation (Ferreira, & Silva, 2005; Magalhães, & Sanz Moral, 2008) and in research on media consumption (Rebelo, 2008; Cardoso, Espanha & Lapa, 2007; Cardoso, Espanha, Lapa, & Araújo, 2009). Moreover, no research focused particularly on the news, except Leote and Serrão (2009) and Brites (2010; 2012; 2015b).

We intended that the sample represents a type of youth that somehow participate in their life contexts, in activities of unconventional or conventional participation. At the same time, we wanted that these "good informants" - using the terminology of Birgitta Höijer (2008, p. 279), who worked on qualitative studies validation - represent diverse economic, educational and socio-cultural environments. The Swedish researcher (2008, p. 279) asks: who are the interviewees, and what do they represent to be selected? Which social groups do

they belong? According to the author, the social group they are representing can indicate a validating option valuation, both for what they represent individually and for that they represent collectively. The homogeneity that a group can point to a culture or subculture is not a belief in the universal denotation, possibly found in a large-scale sample, but a cultural identification, which presents itself a saturation of the sample. In this case, the “good informants” have collective experiences that facilitate the possibility of finding social dialectic beyond the interview situation itself (Höjjer, 2008, p. 279). Jensen (2002) suggests that a way of justifying the sample is the indication of a great diversity, as we will see below, to capture the greatest possible variety of the phenomenon under study, what we seek to do for the diversities of captured forms of participation.

Thinking about the questions arising in the validation of the qualitative investigations, and referring to a qualitative sample of 27 interviews, Kim Schrøder (1999) created media consumption profiles which, even having no statistical representativeness, involved a constant reflection work. Having as background the idea of being representative of social types, as such, the author points to the nature of validation and generalization of the research. Scrutinizing the issues of validation and credibility of research, João Amado and Cristina C. Vieira (2014) highlight the importance that research involves different timing and over time in the field, to maintain the reliability of the data collected, especially to individualize and not to generalize.

The initial sample was, as stated, designed to consider a set of young people with diverse backgrounds and forms of participation among themselves. This group of participants was involved in civic participation forms, albeit with different degrees/levels (Youth Parliament; monthly assembly of social housing neighborhood; young supporters; school newspapers; graffiti; music). The option for these forms of participation established as criteria to have a range of actors, facilitating access to young people who had many other interests beyond traditional politics (of the party youth).

We also note that in some cases, these forms of participation, the reason for choosing them at the beginning, turned out to be casual (for example, about the monthly assembly of social housing neighborhood) and in others, intense and permanent, as we could verify

during the two interviews. Also, the variety of forms of participation escalated about the forms of participation that were selected, since as we anticipate they had other interests that complemented and, in some cases, replaced the initial, as we can see in data analysis. These options and situations contributed much to the diversity in the set, which prevents a possible contamination of the results in favor of one of the participation forms. To reinforce this need to facilitate the research opening processes, we made sure that the sample highlighted also very different family backgrounds, from the points of view of schooling, forms of participation, individual training and the and parents' economic and social power.

The contact with this diverse group of young people occurred in two central moments, over a much politicized period and marked by elections in Portugal (presidential and parliamentary) and also by street demonstrations, above all against the economic crisis that began around 2008 / 2010. In March 2010 we began the first phase of interviews (32 young: 15 girls and 17 boys, between 15 and 18 years old); in January 2011 began the second round of interviews, involving 30 of the 32 young people at that moment<sup>2</sup>.

At the beginning of the first interview, in 2010, we explained to all interviewed, that we created three groups of questions: 1) opinions and attitudes about politics and the *media* (journalism in particular); 2) political behavior; and (3) susceptibilities related to media and journalism (what they think the journalism is and what do they consume). At the beginning of 2011, the interviews focused on the motivations to participate and consume news (including thinking in the news for young people), the media coverage of the elections and in the involvement of the family, giving continuity to the topics previously highlighted by the informants. The proximity of the elections for the Presidency of the Republic (January 23, 2011) allowed informants to talk on the elections with temporal proximity, and that they could match the challenge posed at the time of arranging the interviews. At the beginning of the second interview, we also presented to every participant, a summary of the results of the previous phase realizing the reactions and featured themes. We also explained to them that the first interview results influenced the design of the second, reporting to the emphasis given

by the youngsters to family contexts<sup>3</sup>. The emphasis was an unexpected event because we expected that sociability contexts among peers had prominence.

In addition to seeking a diversified social context, we also tried to find a gender balance, considering Morley (1988), who determined that men like more of the news (p. 45), and Iris Marion Young (1996), who acknowledged a tendency in women, to talk less than men and to provide more information than to propose controversial claims.

As advanced at the beginning of this article, taking into account the political context at the time of news production, and also the consequences of the dictatorship for the civic culture, Which profile is related to the news consumption in the private sphere, considering a sample of young people with different types of participation? Which are the spaces of news conversation and sharing where these young people move, especially that news related to politics?

We made all the categorizations through the answers given by the interviewees, thinking about the story they told (Dahlgren, 2006; Buckingham, 2006 [2000]). We started by reading the transcripts, then identified similarities by groups in responses regarding the consumption of general news, political news and self-reported forms of participation, as central about journalism and participation, and those who stood out in the analysis over time as different markers of the typologies. Only at that stage, and using a qualitative analysis program of speech (MaxQda), we proceed to more detailed work with profiles. Therefore, after identification of the profiles according to the similarities between them, we made in full new readings of the same transcripts, to determine complementary ways of speech (identity, trust, values, and knowledge) and indirect answers. In a first level, following the proposal of Stokes (2003), and to strengthen the profiles composition and validation – groups of informants who have similar attitudes and practices regarding journalism (general and politics consumption) and participation (forms and contexts), we made an analysis of micro-level reinforcement, with the story that each person wanted to tell, crossing it with the profiles identified, to gauge whether they were consistent with each other. The second level was the combination of the individual elements

in the collective, reinforcing the profiles by the similarities between themselves, but also by their differences (Ganito, 2010).

As contexts are important in reading data in detail, and according to Bourdieu (1987), after the initial stages and having grouped the profiles, we characterized them using the previous indicators of capitals, based on schooling, profession and use of technologies by the parents, and also focusing on the future aspirations of the informants, as well as their relationship with digital technologies.

In the reflection on these issues, and based on the analysis of collected testimonies over this time, we have come to five profiles based on specific answers from young people, about these elements identified already: *general consumption of news* and also about *consumption of political information*. We crossed this information subsequently, and as we explained already, with the family context and the way that young people experienced the news in the same space. General consumption refers to self-reported consumption of news, whether they are about accidents, culture, science, current events or politics, for example. In fact, we take into account what they show in their speeches. The approach on political information is related to the way it was experienced in the context of the home, if they involved themselves or not in the adult's conversations, whether they were interested in those conversations or, among other factors, if they would rather prefer to talk about politics indoors or in a wider social space. Thus, we identified five different profiles: Informed Consumers, Poorly Informed Consumer, Emergent Consumers of Information, Consumers in a Self-Project, and Online Consumers.

## PROFILES ACCORDING TO NEWS' PLACE IN YOUTH EXPERIENCES

### INFORMED CONSUMERS

The group of news fans is the Informed Consumers. They all show higher levels of participation, mainly political, and a strong information consumption and production, even in traditional newspapers. It includes 7 young people (three girls and four boys, with ages between 15 and 18 years old; with consistent

and intense self-reported participation forms, between 2010 and 2011: political parties, young supporters, local newspapers, blogging, students association, street demonstrations, petitions, volunteering, chatting with different people), with economic and cultural capital from low to medium/high and high. Social and civic capital exists in transverse mode and power the interest to be informed. They benefited from an environment that, even escaping from high economic capitals, enabled and allowed family contacts/environments (or even friendships) which led to and encourage the reinforcement (from family, above all) and the personal construction (friends and colleagues) of civic capitals. These environments favored the self-training and subsisted independently of adjacent cultural and economics capitals. This social conviviality bonds, reinforced by knowledge networks, are fundamentals, the more broadly they are, the more the possibilities to reinforce the social capital which benefits the reinforcement of conviviality networks (Bourdieu, 1983). By the way, grandparents are positive elements in this young people's speech, even when they are not living together.

There is a remarkable importance in sociability networks for information consumption, to talk to and to circulate knowledge. In this group, those networks are cause and effect of interest and participation, acting independently of the existing economic and cultural capital in the family. While part of the group has a very high family capital, in cultural, economic, social, and also civic dimensions, the other part does not have that economic capacity, and even in some cases nor cultural. However, they outweigh it striving in the personal construction, and also they benefit from social and civic capital developed at home with their parents or grandparents.

We verified that talks about news exceed the family, friends and school dimensions, and are a daily constant in different networks. This group is not representative of the majority, but it is a niche of citizens in counter-current. They constitute and assume themselves in a somewhat obvious way, as a kind of 'marginal/alternative', they are shaped according to the idea of *the other*, who is, on the contrary, interested in the society in which he lives and in the news. Because of their interest in participating in the socio-political dynamics, they resort to an aggressive language to refer to the relevance of the information. As Joaquim explained "Information is everything's basis. It is power. To have information is to be ahead, to have an advantage" (Interview 1). The relevance of information is itself a

social value which facilitates social processes, as highlighted earlier (Lewis, 2006; Moeller, 2012).

The search for information is a state of the spirit, a tool to intensify the forms of reasoning and participation. This profile shows little oscillations over time, both in the intensity of participation as in the forms of news consumption and using new *media*. There are developments, not alterations. In this group, there are four essential media: the internet, newspapers (print and digital), television, and the radio. We found here the assertion of a virtuous circle, concentrating on news consumption, referred by Pipa Norris (2000), but that circle is necessarily extense, i.e. it not only focuses on the news.

News on politics follows the same diversity line, especially in 2010. It implies to see different media, to participate in debates, to watch TV debates (TV newscasts are not enough in this cases), to search information of other parties and to go to other parties web sites. Notably, although it is not the purpose of this article, we found distinguishing marks, especially in this profile, as for the political trends with which they identify themselves, according to what Manuel Braga da Cruz (1990) detected similarly two decades ago. As for confidence in *media*, members of the left-most Parties said they do not trust, one of them linked this distrust to financial and business capital that to some extent restricts journalists. Dahlgren (2009a) considers that a balance between trust and mistrust is important so that democracy works. This thread was evident in the interviews.

In this group, the family has a huge importance in political socialization and news consumption, despite any of them is capable and make it a point reinforcing to make choices independently, far beyond family preferences. When asked about the reason to see the news, we found again identifying family features, the need to correspond regarding knowledge and the ability of conversation and argument. Carlos highlighted the fact to start early watching TV newscasts, stressing his grandparents' influence:

I do not know ... I remember, from very early, to be accustomed to read and to listen to the news, to go to lunch with my grandparents and the television was on to watch the afternoon newscast. If someday I do not watch the TV newscasts, it is unusual for me. I feel I am at the same level as other people (Carlos, Interview 2).

There is an informal setting to discuss news at their homes and everyone can (want to) comment. "*There are no rules, each one gives their opinion*" (Carlos, Interview

2); “*It is informal!!!*” (Joaquin, Interview 2); “*Freedom and joy!*” (Natercia, Interview 2); “*At home, I’m more for making jokes, I comment ironically what my grandmother says*” (Lito, Interview 2).

It is highlighted, for example, comparing with the other groups’ responses, the enhancement of the symbolic importance of news at home, favoring social ties with them. The family (nuclear and extended) emerged as a fundamental pillar of their willingness to inform themselves, but sharing information (political or not) is open to other groups, including people whom they do not know. The family is a social space where they found the fertilizer to become interested in the news and to participate. Even facing low economic capitals, civic and social capitals can overcome these difficulties. In any case, their action spaces are much more extensive than the context of the family, are far more extensive than the family context, friends, colleagues and even strangers are valid and relevant interlocutors.

#### POORLY INFORMED CONSUMERS

In contrast to the previous profile, we found the group named Poorly Informed Consumers, bringing together five young people, two girls and three boys, three of them aged 15, and the others 17 and 18 years old in 2010. They all have in common living in a social housing neighborhood. Their parents’ educational level does not exceed the elementary education; the qualification of their professional activities is low, and their access to the internet is virtually null, denoting a lower technological capital (Rojas et al., 2011). We can state that the adjacent capital prevails at different levels, although it is worth mentioning that we do not insert in this profile all the young people interviewed and residents in the neighborhood.

For these young people (with self-reported inconsistent participation forms between 2010 and 2011: neighborhood assemblies, sport, help at home, blogging, demonstrations at school), regarding informative news consumption, television is the most valued media (although only occasionally), in diverse contexts. It is evident when informants refer to news, and when asked how do they become aware of issues concerning them. Also, the news is a matter of family conversation (although little intense and diversified, it is relevant in a shortage context) and associated to the prevention of risks and dangers, in the logic of protection referred

(Lemish, 2007). Television is useful to illustrate perils, the devious and the norm, it is in the living-room, in plain view of all, and its content becomes an easy example to prevent. The new *media* are seen as a risk space by parents and even for some of the young, associated with the use (unknown) and to the contents.

In this profile, in 2010, the media used to obtain information was mainly television, turned on in the living room or the kitchen. Beatriz says that his mother used television as a guide when she referred to the habits to watch and comment TV newscasts at home:

– Yes, I watch [TV newscasts] with my mom and my brother. We comment, my mother, when there are dangers says: See? Even the other day they were talking about the perils of pools, and the next day I was going [to a pool], and my mother told me: You see, do not jump headlong into the water. She warns both me and my brother. (Beatriz, Interview 1)

The tendency to the lack of dialogue is visible in these family contexts. Dino (the only one without an e-mail account at the first interview) evidenced this situation when suggested that his father likes to watch TV news in silence, confirming that they do not talk about them. He likes to watch movies in the social center, although being able to do it at home because in the center he feels more accompanied and has a chance to talk about what he sees and hears:

– Well, at least at night you watch TV with your parents, right?

– Yes. My father does not want to [do] another [thing], he only wants to watch TV newscasts.

– Why do you say that?

– Because he likes to see everything. He likes to watch TV newscasts.

– Do you talk about what you see?

– No, no, ... no. (Dino, Interview 1)

These young people look at the newspapers bought by their parents (the most often mentioned were the *Jornal de Notícias*—a national and centennial newspaper, which used to be a regional one- or a sports newspaper, or get them when they go to the coffee shop. This group highlights gossip magazines, photo-novels and those of *Morangos com Açúcar* [Strawberries with sugar] (a photo-comic for young people) as elements which fulfill the news references to them, including boys. They

also mentioned as news sources, the journals identified shamefully as “Gossip” and tabloids (*TV Guia* [TV Guide], *Maria* [Mary], and *Cuore* [Heart]), bought by their mothers or girlfriends.

Another characteristic of this group was the lack of political news follow-up, particularly in the electoral period. When it occurs, it is done occasionally using television (especially TV newscasts), as it was the case during the elections from 2009 to 2011. The conversation about politics occurs casually in the family and youths are more listeners than participants. We should not disregard that it still constitutes a point for political information movement. There was a deficit of elections’ follow-up, as well as talks were not used as a way to discuss them. There are elements denoting the option to restraint from political issues.

Comparing 2010 and 2011, we detect the absence of information and talks about the elections and politics in this profile. It can be done in the private sphere, among relatives, and as much, between friends at school, although the talks may be superficial and often marked by the unusual. There is still a tendency for a lack of news about politics, although it is a subject particularly spoken indoors and in the family. Rute, who voted for the first time, said she discussed it with her grandmother, leaving her the burden of the decision. “[I talked to] my grandmother. She said: vote on Manuel Alegre, and I did it” (Ruth, Interview 2). As Magalhães (2008) stated: “The effects of participation of social network members in the decision to vote by a given voter are amplified when those interlocutors are people whose relationship with the voter is close enough to facilitate the coordination of behaviors.” (p. 50).

In the second year of our research, this propensity for a lower consumption of news continued to be evident, when referred to whom/what encourages them to news consumption.

Summing up and thinking about the two years, regarding the general and political information consumption in this profile, the family had a prominent role (though not always dialoguing in both directions, in particular on political affairs), also linked to the prevention of some perils. The news is related to the private family context, although this not always means to bet on the strengthening of consumption or on a family interaction allowing an in-depth dialogue in which young people be active participants.

#### EMERGENT CONSUMERS OF INFORMATION

In the profile related to Emergent Consumers of Information (composed of six girls and three boys, between 16 and 17 years old, with self-reported participation forms, between 2010 and 2011, highly focused on school activities: Youth Parliament, school newspaper, volunteering, political party, blogging), we can recognize two groups. That of young people whose parents have secondary and superior education, and they all are coming from the school; and that of young people whose parents have only the elementary and primary schooling. The first parent’s group use the internet, unlike the seconds’. About the informative news consumption, in 2010 the television still had a major relevance, especially at elections time, influenced by the parents to some extent. In fact, and stating the timeliness of this article data, continuing to be the most updated in Portugal, especially on youth and results of a qualitative study. In Portugal, television continues to be the preferred *media* for news consumption, although there is a parallel reinforcement of online consumption, as proven in recent national and international studies (Cardoso et al., 2015; Cardoso, & Martinho, 2016; ERC, 2016). Pedro Magalhães (2008) remembers that elections are excuses to reset politics in everyday speeches. At least temporarily, politicization levels of daily discussions, and “despite everything, informal political debates constitute the main source of political information for voters” (p. 480). Closer sources of influence, even personal, and members of each one of us social network constitute elements for facilitation.

The internet is also indicated since 2010, highlighting the access to newspapers that migrated from print to online, but also other spaces, such as YouTube. There is a convergence of *media* to the information consumption and a reinforcement between the first and the second year of this research, especially in the final phase, when interviewees were already in college or close to entering it.

There is another reference to highlight, especially in the young people group with greater educational, economic and cultural capital: the use of news to empower socialization both at school and at home. The newscasts, mainly at dinner, are an excuse to be informed and a source for a talk. They feed the conversation. The family eventually act as news “resonance boxes.” There



is also a search for information in printed newspapers (although in a lesser extent than television and the internet) for reference: the weekly journal *Expresso* [weekly newspaper]; the daily newspaper *Público*; weekly magazines from these journals, and the newspaper *Jornal de Notícias* [Daily news].

Specifically, about political information and in particular, to the coverage of 2010 elections, this group evidenced a more intense use of television, but also of political parties and the government web sites (mainly in the first group constituted by young people from school). At the beginning of 2011, television continued to be the most relevant information *media* about the presidential election, and conversations on this issue with parents became very present. Marta, in particular, was also negatively influenced as well since her mother went through a more disinterested phase and was avoiding the news, which affected their conversations, as well as the fact she is was not old enough to vote.

In both the years, the tendency found in this profile was the same: talking with the family, though with friends randomly, widening the social network about the profile that we show next. In some situations, interviewees also mentioned friends, school, and teachers. Between parents, the father is represented as the connoisseur of politics and reliable news. Talk to the father means to talk to someone who knows what he is talking about and has an opinion. For example, in 2010 and 2011, Marisa answered with the same centrality: "With the father, because my father has a very well-formed opinion on politics" (Marisa, Interview 1). Politics is situated in a traditional and masculine sphere.

Comparing this profile with Poorly Informed Consumers, it also focuses on the television for news consumption, but not exclusively, young people are an active part of the conversations at home, and the family is the most suitable space to talk about political issues. The role of the family appears above all, as an incentive and an enhancer for consumption and conversation on the news. Although in this set the talks extending to the group of classmates at school and friends, and this also happened with politics information, it maintains a more homely twist, mainly focused on the male figure. They identified the father (or the step father) as an influential figure.

#### CONSUMERS IN A SELF-PROJECT

In the group Consumers in a Self-Project (profile constituted by boys between 15 and 18 years old. With self-reported forms of participation related with satisfaction for their own sake, as indicated: graffiti, MC, debate tournaments, political party, sports competitions; blogging, to talk to the father, debates at school), the parents' educational level (with exceptions) is medium/high, especially with secondary and higher levels. They can access easily to internet and parents do not limit it, although not all of them had internet early in their lives: they have other capabilities to participate which allow them to overcome this initial difficulty.

One of this profile characteristics, only consisted by boys, is the centrality of their interests. News information acquired a particular relevance and linked their initiatives, valued accordingly to collective interests (in 2010 and 2011), even between those who, in the beginning, respond that they are not interested in news. Analyzing the interviews, we see how, both in their daily activities as in need to build their own identity to be valued socially, these young people end up informed for self-evaluation inside their conviviality groups (through both journalism and other forms of information more focused on their personal needs). When asked if they have time to be aware of the news, Simão responds immediately: "Obviously" (Simão, Interview 1). The first impulse is to speak on television, but throughout the conversation, he refers to the importance that printed journal has on his life, whereas information is credible. Simão is an avid consumer of newscasts in different channels and at different times of the day, and information just facilitates him to stand out among colleagues.

On political information, in 2009 elections, parents and television were the most mentioned *media* by this group members, except Brown, Guilherme, and Dário, who said not to follow those of 2009. In 2011 elections, Simão was very active in the information consumption. "In this case, all of them, the radio, the internet, television and newspapers, namely the DN [the national centenary newspaper and a referent] that surveyed the Ministries' expenditures" (Simão, Interview 2). Júlio highlighted the reading of the weekly *newsmagazine* "Visão" [Vision] to see political opinions and TV for the elections in

particular. Fausto hardly sought information on the elections, despite being a consumer of another type of information.

Reflecting on how they talk about *media* and information at home, Simão (who likes to talk about these issues especially with his father) described, in any case, how his mother, who holds a relevant position in a Portuguese entity for youths, deal with challenges and keeps an open mind to young people issues. Considering relations of trust, the comparison between *media*, family and friends, Fausto, Simão, and Júlio associated their talks on the news and serious issues with their father (as happened to other participants as Tania, Estela, and Marisa). These young people have greater centrality on themselves. Their participation forms are self-centered processes and marked by different personal wishes, through which they expect to contribute in building a positive image of their capabilities inside their conviviality groups. The news consumption works accordingly with their wishes and personal interests, and not much of information addressed to a wider group and the collective.

#### ONLINE CONSUMERS

Finally, we focused on a very specific profile that avoids at all costs, the traditional information. The Online Consumers group (four girls between 16 and 18 years old, with mainly self-reported non-conventional participation forms: vegetarianism, blogging, Facebook, music, chat with friends, political party), with one exception, already have internet for several years.

They are far from the traditional information, as regards to news consumption they prefer the possibility to find the information they need on the internet, looking over all the causes they consider to be social, for example about NGOs, racism and human rights. The information they consume is used mainly to reinforce pre-existing ideas, according to that pointed out by Doris Graber (2002). Cândida, who prefers to walk on the street with friends instead to stay at home, believes that the internet is “a vice” [*It is like coffee. You drink one coffee, then drink another, and after that, you want another. It became an addictive behavior*] (Cândida, Interview 1)]. She focuses on the internet and journals. She never had the habit of watching TV to be informed, since before having internet, read the news in newspapers bought by her father. “*When I don't have classes by the morning, and I don't want to turn on the computer to study, or watch TV, I read the newspaper.*” (Cândida, Interview 1). To Cândida, who during the first interview made a point

of saying that she has no regular habits of information consumption, finally mentioned those and denoted she was aware of the topics. She reads the reference newspapers the father buys, usually see news *websites*. In this case, we made the identification with the choice of specific TV channels.

About political information and having as a concrete example the coverage of 2009 elections, we did not verify this clear preference for the internet, on the contrary to what happened with general news, or those related to particular issues interesting to them. In this case, political news consumption flows in social consumptions inside the private and family sphere.

Regarding who encourages them to consume news, we did not find a centrality in the family experiences, unlike the other profiles described already. However, as for the information on the elections, the situation is the reverse, in the two years. The family stands out, but we should reinforce, not exclusively, as it happens in the other profiles. As for the circumstances in which they dealt with the *media* at home, there is a reaffirmation of their wills within the family. Cândida states that there is not a specific time to talk about information at home, but they use to discuss specific issues openly. Tania says: “*I always drive the 'bitaites' [Laugh] I produce the debates*” (Tania, Interview 2); Jade refers to generational differences with parents.

In comparison with previous profiles, we do not verify the prevalence of the family in the talks about news in general, or on the use of television as information *media*. News consumption is related particularly to participation interests, such as NGOs, culture or, for example, vegetarianism and animal rights. In any case, news with a particular political component was identified in a domain (though not exclusive) of the family space (extended to grandparents and uncles). Regarding political news, there is a resemblance to the previous profiles concerning the prevalence of family space.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Attempting to answer the starting questions and not wanting to extrapolate a representation, but to present trends crossed with other studies of quantitative character, we identified five profiles with different experiences about the news. We also verified the importance of the family as a space to feed (or not) the interest of young people in news and politics. Even when there is less incidence of communicational processes between youth and parents (as in Poorly Informed Consumers

profile), the family seems to be the news' resonance box, with television news taking precedence. As such, the family is filling the lack of interest of youngers involved in news and political news, in the Poorly Informed Consumers profile; and encouraging members of the Emergent Information Consumers profile. This important position of family space and youth which are part of it denotes a field of research that deserves a deepening in the future. As a limitation of this research, we point out that we did not carry out research with parents and in the school. To strengthen the research, we should consider the uniqueness and relevance of the family as a private space, the *media*, and political socialization, as well as the relations of power, and also through a better understanding of gender relations.

We remember that young people associated (although not exclusively) their fathers to a greater capacity to talk about news and politics, maintaining the need for debate on these gender issues (Morley, 1988; Young, 1996), even considering the speeches of youth. As we seen, news consumption is linked to emotional and identity elements empowering or discouraging the action (influenced by the experiences and oscillations, and news interests of family members even by the experiences and oscillations, and their relatives' news interests, especially in the profiles Poorly informed consumers and Emergent Consumers of Information). The news choice is subordinated mainly to the emotions rather than rationality. Therefore, this may be a future research field.

We still point out that in Online Consumers profile it is evident that the family is not the central nexus for socializing through the news (although it is an important concerning political news); this aspect is enhanced, perhaps, because the group members are activists, mainly in actions of non-traditional forms of participation. In the Informed Consumers profile, it is evident the link between civic cultures and news consumption. Also, young people's strongly committed civic and political attitude expanded the news' scope of action -including news of political nature-, far beyond the private sphere.

The civic capital was present in almost all the positive cases of improvement of news consumption over

time. In some cases, this civic *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1987; Dahlgren, 2010), took root in some young people, extrapolates the familiar part and comes from learnings connected to an individuality, built and awakened by the self in a more recent path. This capacity of resilience of the *self* and the importance of civic capital are relevant factors to deepen in future research.

We also found that it is beneficial to think in an effective conjugation of *media* and citizenship literacy. Although talking about literacy for the *media* already involves talking about literacy for citizenship, the effective union of both seems to be fruitful. The points of confluence between news social consumption and its connection with the *self* ability to its empowerment reinforced this idea. Remember that some youngers considered the news as a power source (Milner, 2009), and from another point of view, young people from the third profile highlighted non-traditional news, since they are more interested in less relevant topics of the traditional *media* agenda, which correspond to the need of civic information. Considering the nature of *media* consumption type in Portugal, still dominated by television, despite being increasingly disputed with digital consumptions (Cardoso et al., 2015; Cardoso, & Martinho, 2016; ERC, 2016)-, we think that the Internet, which looks like the future, and television, which is entrenched (Lemish, 2007; Ponte, 2011), should be taken into account in plannings for the improvement of consumption types and participation, and in proposals for *media* education reaching different groups of youths.

Thus, news *social consumptions* are important elements that contribute to thinking about new forms of civic media literacy, more focused on social processes than in the quantification of knowledge and skills. The news, as we hope to have demonstrated, continue to play a relevant role in the construction of civic thought and political action. This occurs both among young people who see in the news (in *stricto sensu*) a guide for the development of diverse aspects of sociability in their daily lives, as well as between those who are absorbing what is being shown on the screen, going through those who see the news as important elements to think about their (future) lives.

## FOOTNOTES

1. During the period of data compilation, the author was a PhD student, with a scholarship granted by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, SFRH/BD/47530/2008. Now, she is Post-Doctoral student, also with a scholarship granted by FCT, SFRH/BPD/92204/2013.

2. In addition to these two central moments, we developed a wider research about youth, journalism and participation, from where the data presented in this article comes from, included direct observation and two phases of focus groups (traditional focus groups = 15; participatory focus groups = 10). Direct observation had as main objective to facilitate contact with reality and treat these young people to have some prior and everyday knowledge of the presence of the researcher in their spaces. On the other hand, the focus groups aimed particularly to perceive collective interactions and also to open exploratory space to consider participatory research deeper involved in research, youth who, at this stage were invited to do exploratory interviews themselves, and share them with everyone in the focus groups. Thus, the interviews focused more in the subject of this article in particular.

3. All the work of theoretical, conceptual and empirical setting was inspired by the Grounded theory (Seale, 2004), although not exhaustively. Even though there was a dialogue between data and theorizing, the second was not completely subjugated by the first. In any case, data talked as they were compiled and analyzed, producing decisive alterations in the course of the research (for example, in the substantiality given to the prevalence of television consumption and the importance of the family in the reading of contexts).

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