

Original Research

The gendered digital daily lives of young people in the city of Saint Louis, Senegal

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Abstract

This article is part of a sociological analysis of digital uses from a gender perspective. The gendered use of digital technology by young people in so-called intermediate cities such as Saint-Louis in Senegal deserves to be unveiled by the social sciences in order to obtain a more detailed analysis of their various digital practices. The concepts of social reproduction, capital and field borrowed from Pierre Bourdieu serve as a conceptual framework to shed light on this space, the scene of multiple interactions. The quantitative approach adopted involved administering a questionnaire to 549 young people, including 252 girls (46% of those surveyed) and 297 young men. These young people, aged between 18 and 24, live in 7 targeted neighbourhoods (peripheral, residential or mixed) in the commune of Saint-Louis. The aim of this article is to highlight two aspects that should guide our approach to identifying the typology of gendered digital uses: social empowerment and digital empowerment. Generally speaking, digital practices are based on strong interaction, entertainment, content creation and, to a lesser extent, community or political involvement, for both young women and young men, with relatively small differences. However, online gaming and the use of digital platforms requiring more advanced digital skills remain dominated by young men. When it comes to using digital technology for schooling, young women have a higher percentage (32.53% compared to 22.55% for young men). This indicates a transposition of social practices into the digital domain.

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Résumé

Cet article s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une analyse sociologique des usages numériques sous l'angle du genre. L'usage genré du numérique par les jeunes des villes dites intermédiaires comme Saint-Louis du Sénégal mérite d'être dévoilé par les sciences sociales afin d'obtenir une analyse plus fine de leurs différentes pratiques numériques. Les concepts de reproduction sociale, de capital et de champ empruntés à Pierre Bourdieu servent de cadre conceptuel pour éclairer cet espace, théâtre d'interactions multiples. L'approche quantitative adoptée a consisté à administrer un questionnaire à 549 jeunes, dont 252 filles (46% des enquêtés) et 297 jeunes hommes. Ces jeunes, âgés de 18 à 24 ans, vivent dans 7 quartiers ciblés (périphériques, résidentiels ou mixtes) de la commune de Saint-Louis. L'objectif de cet article est de mettre en évidence deux aspects qui doivent guider notre démarche pour identifier la typologie des usages numériques genrés : l'empowerment social et l'empowerment numérique. D'une manière générale, les pratiques numériques sont basées sur l'interaction forte, le divertissement, la création de contenus et, dans une moindre mesure, l'engagement associatif ou politique, tant pour les jeunes femmes que pour

les jeunes hommes, avec des différences relativement faibles. Cependant, les jeux en ligne et l'utilisation de plateformes numériques nécessitant des compétences numériques plus avancées restent dominés par les jeunes hommes. En ce qui concerne l'utilisation de la technologie numérique pour la scolarité, les jeunes femmes ont un pourcentage plus élevé (32,53% contre 22,55% pour les jeunes hommes). Cela indique une transposition des pratiques sociales dans le domaine numérique.

Mots-clés : genre, compétences numériques, sociologie, génération Z, Sénégal

1. Introduction

Perceived as a global trend, urbanization associated with a juvenilization of the population is a growing reality, particularly in Africa. This is borne out by forecasts from the United Nations (2024), according to which the under-18s will account for more than 60% of the world's urban population. Senegal, with almost 75% of its population aged under 35 (RGPH-5, 2023), is no exception to this trend. In parallel with this juvenilization associated with the development of cities, we should note the increased digitisation leading to changes in cities, including in West Africa (Chenal et al; 2022).

These upheavals will undoubtedly affect the social practices of young generation Z in urban areas. This digital transition nevertheless conceals socio-spatial disparities, particularly in terms of digital access and skills. The stakes are so high that we need to look at the digital practices of these young city dwellers, particularly those in the intermediate city of Saint Louis in Senegal, home to no fewer than 254,000 people according to the latest census in 2023.

We have chosen to focus on 18–24-year-olds, aware that they can redefine their place in the city, particularly through their gendered uses. Although gender is not the only variable that differentiates digital practices, it nevertheless plays a predominant role (Décret-Rouillard, 2024.) The way in which young people use digital technologies is not only linked to a rational choice from an economic point of view (cost-benefit), but also has a social dimension because of the gender dimension that is incorporated into it. The aim is also to understand the mechanism for reproducing social inequalities in access to digital technology from the point of view of digital skills.

The lack of conclusive data on the digital uses of young people in intermediate cities in relation to gender justifies the choice of our line of research. We hypothesise that gendered digital practices are an extension of social practices, while at the same time enabling young people to build up specific assets. By virtue of its open system, digital technology enables certain young people, regardless of their sex, to strengthen three types of capital: cultural, economic and social. The inseparable concepts of social reproduction, capital and field borrowed from Pierre Bourdieu show that the digital world corresponds to a space that enables a wide variety of interactions, be they professional, relational, administrative, recreational, educational, associative, etc. The existence of digital capital also reinforces the second-level digital divide (Granjon, 2021). Moreover, the existence of digital capital would reinforce the second-level digital divide (Granjon, 2021).

The digital skills approach has the merit of highlighting social inequalities in access to digital technologies. We are less interested in inequalities linked to access in the broadest sense. It's not just a question of infrastructure, because players have been able to develop strategies, but also of inequalities in digital usage. This article follows on from the work of the 'social access' movement, whose researchers describe this type of divide, based on digital skills, as 'second degree' (Hargittai, 2002), (Ragnedda and Muschert, 2013).

In short, the digital divide is no longer seen from the angle of infrastructure but from that of digital skills or digital capital in the Bourdieusian sense of the term, for whom the field corresponds to this "structured space of positions".

Digital inequalities seem to reflect social inequalities, with consequences in various areas such as entrepreneurship, political participation, health, education, etc. (Sparks, 2013). Jan van Dijk (2019) agrees, arguing that digital uses are above all indexed to 'old' social inequalities, but also that digital information and communication technologies (DICTs) are likely to intensify these inequalities. Other authors (Ragnedda and Mutsvairo, 2018; Van Dijk, 2019) go further by referring to the emergence of new inequalities. This article focuses on key gender-related variables, which leads us to ask the following questions: Is gender a determining factor in the development of digital literacy among young people? Are they using digital technology to transform their city? How can we understand the gendered use of certain digital platforms and social media?

2. Methodology

The methodology section covers the following points: the study site and population, sampling by neighbourhood, the data collection tool and data analysis. The data comes from a research project on digital policies and infrastructure development in two intermediate towns in Saint Louis. Only data from the first city cited and based on a quantitative approach were used.

2.1. Study site and Population

The former capital of French West Africa, with a strong colonial heritage, and a university town, Saint Louis is located on the coast in north-west Senegal. As the data from the latest RGPH-5, carried out in 2023, was not available at the time of data collection, we were forced to use the data from the 2013 population census. Provisional results from this census were not available until July 2024. The municipal population was 209732 in 2013, spread over 22 neighbourhoods. For the purposes of this study only, 7 neighbourhoods (Nord, Guet Ndar, Goxu Mbacc, Cité Vauvert, Ndiolofène, Bango and Pikine) were targeted, with a distribution that took into account the typology of the neighbourhoods.

It should be noted that residential areas such as Cité Vauvert and Nord have a satisfactory level of facilities. Like the fishermen's neighbourhoods of Guet Ndar and Goxu Mbacc on the Langue de Barbarie, the Pikine district remains densely populated, and still has sanitation problems. Another typology concerns mixed neighbourhoods. The target population was made up of young men and women, both in and out of school, living in seven residential, mixed or peripheral neighbourhoods. Knowing the number of men and women, the same procedure was repeated to determine the number of young men and women to be surveyed per neighbourhood.

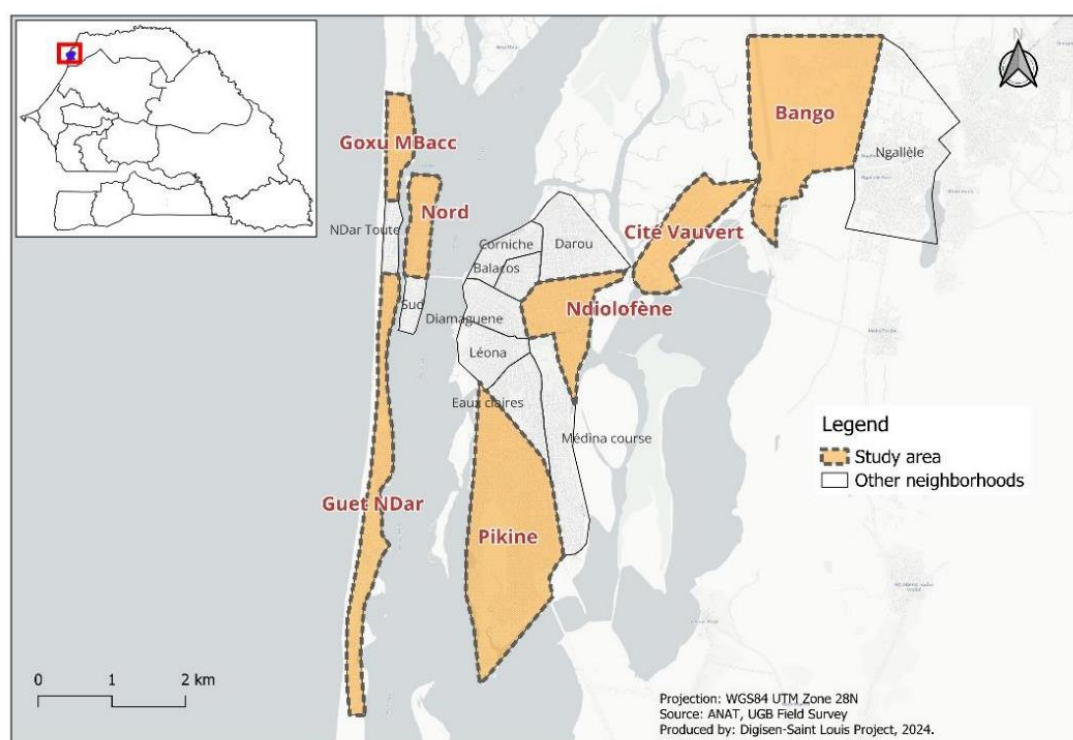


Figure 1. Targeted neighbourhoods

2.2. Sampling

Our sampling frame is 102552 inhabitants representing the population of the seven neighbourhoods targeted by the research project. The type of data collection tools and a quota of 500 respondents will have been defined beforehand by the landlord who funded the research. The seven neighbourhoods selected as laboratory areas are representative of the socio-spatial dynamics of the city. We used stratified random sampling to reach young people whether or not they were attending school. As each neighbourhood is equivalent to a stratum, two levels of stratification were used: according to age (18-24) and gender.

For example, to calculate the number of people surveyed in Pikine, the population of Pikine was taken out of the total population of the 7 target neighbourhoods, i.e. $500 = n / N * 500$. $51450 / 102552 *$

Knowing the number of women and men in each neighbourhood, the same procedure was used to determine the number of women and men in each neighbourhood.

Table 1. Breakdown of respondents by neighbourhood

Selected hoods	neighbour-	Total Workforce	Number of respondents per neighbourhood	Number of women interviewed per neighbourhood	Percentage of quota	Neighbourhood typology
Pikine		51450	251	123	50%	Expanding, high-density peripheral district

Goxu Mbacc	18150	88	46	17%	High-density neighbourhood
Guet Ndar (ndax)	9895	48	25	10%	Densely populated area
Ndiolofene	9330	45	22	9%	Mix neighbourhood
Bango	7972	39	17	8%	Expanding suburbs
Nord	3038	15	7	3%	Residential area
Cité Vauvert	2717	13	7	3%	Mix neighbourhood
Total	102552	500	247	100%	

To ensure the quality of the data, each enumerator was asked to complete a further five questionnaires in addition to the 50 questionnaires to be administered. This approach was adopted in anticipation of possible cancellations of incomplete questionnaires. After verification, only one questionnaire was invalidated, reducing the number of questionnaires retained to 549.

2.3. Data collection and analysis tools.

A team of 10 enumerators with at least a master's degree in sociology or geography collected the data using the Kobotoolbox software between April and May 2024. The data was processed using Excel. The quantitative approach adopted involved administering a questionnaire to 549 young people, including 252 girls and 297 young men. The latter represented 54% of the respondents. Data collection focused on the following points: Access to social infrastructure, Access to digital networks, Use of digital networks, and Digital governance.

For the purposes of this article, the analysis of data on gendered digital usage required particular attention to the following variables: the purposes of digital usage, the social media most popular with young men and young women, the impact of gender on digital skills, the use or otherwise of digital technology for issues relating to civic engagement, not forgetting the practice of gaming.

3. Results

Senegal remains a country marked by the youth of its population, which means that we need to look at the way in which digital technology is grafted onto the everyday practices, and more particularly the gender practices, of young people in the city of Saint-Louis. It should be remembered that these young people (aged 18-24) from this intermediate city are an integral part of generation Z, a global generation considered to be connected, or even hyper-connected. The data comes from a sample of 549 respondents (98% of whom were Senegalese), broken down as follows: 252 young women and 297 young men, 98% of whom were at school and 2% not at school. 66% of the young people surveyed had familiarised themselves with digital technologies through individual and informal experiences, 66% of them girls. A significant proportion of this socialisation to digital technologies took place through peers, with 32% of the young people surveyed, including 15% of girls and 32% of young men.

All the young people questioned in this survey in this medium-sized city own a smartphone, demonstrating the democratisation of this technological object. The results below show that both young women and men are using smartphones from an early age. The percentage of girls

who have obtained their first smartphone between the ages of 08 and 16 is 30.41%, compared with 39% for young men in the same age bracket. What's more, 15.48% of girls surveyed got their first smartphone between the ages of 17 and 23, almost the same percentage (14.93%) as young men. While smartphones make it easier for young people to fit in with their peer group, owning certain brands - in this case the iPhone, which accounts for 41.53% of smartphone brands owned - increases prestige, particularly among young girls. Some 54% of them own an iPhone. The quality of photos sought by this category of respondents is not unrelated to this, as is the data security offered by this brand.

And from this perspective, from the point of view of social representations, the acquisition of an iPhone considered as the 'dominant' brand would be a sign of distinction (Bourdieu, 1979) and guarantee a place of choice in this field among peers where the issue is no longer the possession of a smartphone. From the point of view of R. Merton (1953), all consumer goods have two functions: manifest and latent. As a result, the latent function of owning an iPhone is the social esteem it generates because of its high cost. The paradox with owning a smartphone, particularly the latest models from this brand, is that in many cases it appears to be the symbol of a false 'pecuniary power' because it is offered.

With the existence of a very dynamic second-hand smartphone market, largely dominated by the iPhone, it will be easier for young people from working-class backgrounds to afford one. And, as we shall see below, the digital tool determines usage. By way of illustration, cybersecurity, gaming, or even the quality of the camera for taking videos to create content, or photos to feed an Instagram page, condition the purchase of one brand rather than another.

Note that 44.2% of respondents own a Techno brand smartphone. This parenthesis on smartphone brands is interesting in more ways than one, given that we are in the digital domain where the possession of a certain capital determines the position of each individual in this field of interaction. The Boudonian theory of rational choice helps us to understand this logic of action by young people, reinforcing their agentivity. Other factors, such as the availability and accessibility of connectivity, have helped to boost digital practices. The use of the smartphone, which remains the main digital access tool alongside the computer and tablet for young people in Saint-Louis, undoubtedly implies multi-use.

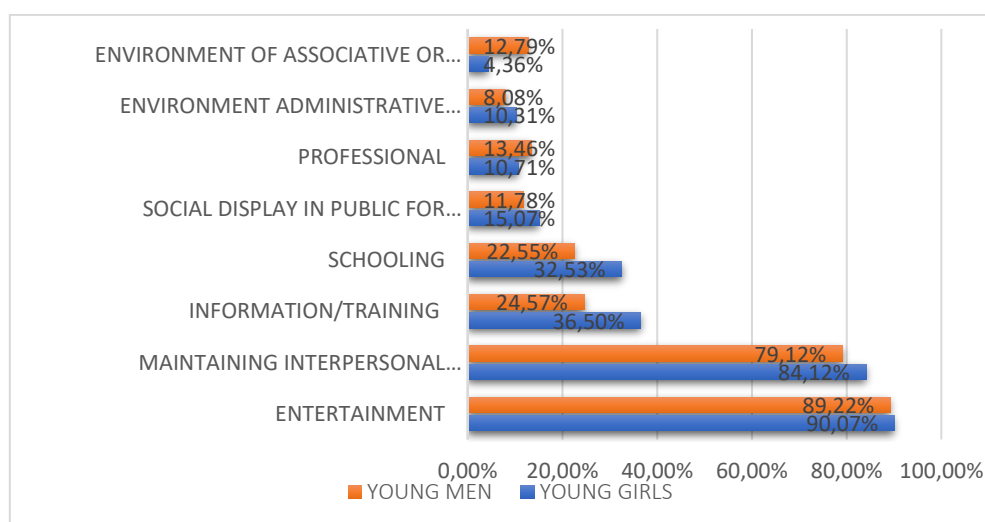


Figure 2. Different uses of digital technologies by gender (*Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data*)

Usage also depends on connectivity. In terms of access, community efforts supported by local initiatives, such as collective subscription to home wifi, are improving internet access in neighbourhoods and households. Mobile data remains the main source of internet connection, in addition to young people's access to open private wifi. On a different note, if we refer to the figure above, it is clear that entertainment occupies a prime position in the pyramid of uses, for both young women and young men. These data lead us to recall the different social functions of digital technology for young people of both sexes.

These revolve around:

- Interaction (networking)
- Distraction
- The search for identity models through the principle of imitation (G. Tarde, 1890 [1895])) and identification with influencers.
- The information function (which can undoubtedly encourage propaganda or any form of manipulation). Misinformation remains a real scourge on social networks, and young people are the prime targets. The proliferation of fake news. Traditional media are finding young people on their own turf.
- The self-staging function (through challenges, dances, retouched photos, etc.).

The low percentage of young women (4.36%) who use digital technology for voluntary or political activities confirms their lack of interest in public affairs or civic engagement. However, in the educational sphere, if we compare the use of digital technology by young men (22.55%) with that of young women (32.53%), we see a clear gap between these two categories. As part of their civic or political commitment. High school students are particularly active. The notion of civic or political engagement in the context of this article refers to civic education, participation in sporting and cultural activities in neighbourhoods and, finally, contribution to political debate.

According to the data collected, there are still very few women involved in associative or political activities. This state of affairs reflects Senegalese society, which is strongly marked by the invisibility of women in the public or political sphere. It would also be interesting to look at the social media most popular with 18–24-year-olds.

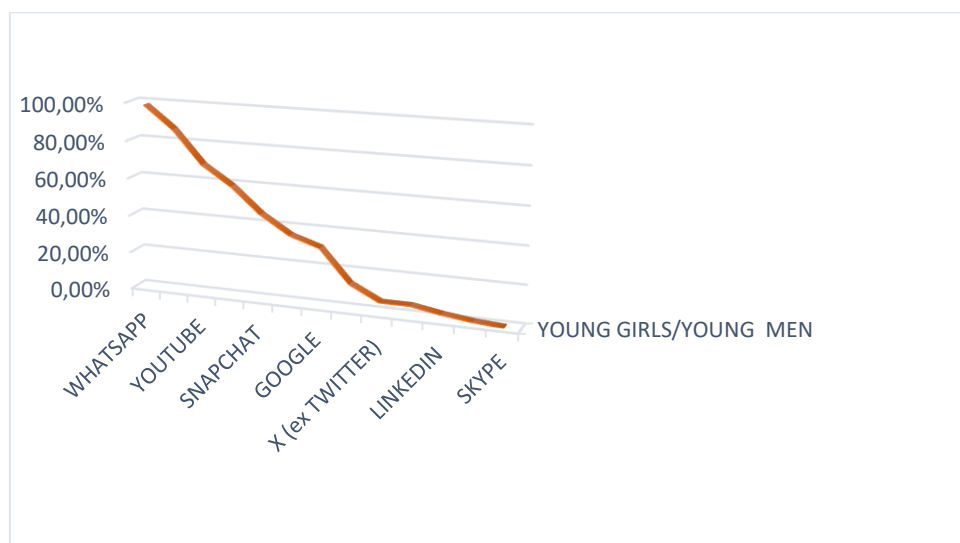


Figure 3. Use of social media (*Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data*)

An analysis of the use of the three main social media suggests that the activities carried out by young people of all genders consist mainly of keeping in touch with friends, watching videos, clips, films, documentaries and news. The example of Skype (0%), released in 2003, demonstrates the obsolescence of certain applications that are little known to this generation Z and are doomed to disappear.

Table 2. *Trio of the main activities carried out on WhatsApp (Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data)*

	Percentage of young people	Percentage of young girls	Percentage of young men
Stay in touch with friends /family	96,35 %	95, 63%	96, 96%
Get informed	45.71%	44.84%	46.46%
Content creation	19.48%	19.84%	19, 19 %

WhatsApp remains the social media most used by both young women (98.4%) and young men (98.5%). 96.35% of uses of this platform are devoted to keeping in touch with friends, with 95.63% for girls and 96.96% for boys. This platform is a preferred channel for obtaining information, with 45.71% of respondents using it, including 44.84% of young women and 45.46% of young men. 19.48% of young people use it to create content (19.84% of girls and 19.19% of boys). To a lesser extent, young people use WhatsApp to obtain information (8%) and to look for a work placement (2%); because it involves self-exposure, the Snapchat application remains popular with young girls. Furthermore, a logic of rationalising their internet subscription dictates the use of WhatsApp, which is perceived as an unconnected platform, particularly by young people whose main source of connectivity is mobile data.

Table 3. *Trio of the activities done thanks to Tik Tok (Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data)*

	Percentage of young people	Percentage of young girls	Percentage of young men
Watch videos	62.47%	65, 87%	59, 59%
Stay in touch with friends /family	32.24%	29.76%	34.34%
Content creation	25.68%	26.19%	25, 25%

17.66% of young people, including 17% of girls and 18.18% of young men, use Tik Tok for information. Tik Tok's user-friendliness has been a major factor in its adoption by Generation Z, young people who are both consumers and creators of content. The latter activity is carried out by 25.68% of young people via WhatsApp, 26.19% of young women and 25.25% of young men. The growing importance of these three main social media, seen as 'digital platforms', seems to be due to the following factors a platform for expression, without barriers. Young people are not content with just one platform. In concrete terms, WhatsApp and Tik Tok occupy a privileged place in young people's digital biographies. WhatsApp crystallises the following activities: creating content, communicating with friends and family, watching videos, creating content and providing information.

Thanks to its algorithm, which makes it easy to use, even for people with little or no education, Tik Tok can be seen as a platform for digital inclusion, enabling young people to create and share content (Jaquet, 2014); unlike LinkedIn, which remains a professional platform with very little representation among these young people. At the same time, X (formerly twitter) remains a reliable platform for obtaining information and, from the point of view of those interviewed, helps to guard against misinformation.

3.1. Social activities

The graph above shows that some platforms are more 'feminine' than others, notably Snapchat and Pinterest. Snapchat's success lies in the ephemeral format of its content (snaps and stories), but also thanks to its augmented reality filter, which makes it possible to erase certain imperfections or even improve a person's appearance thanks to virtual make-up. Girls are said to be Snapchat's biggest fans (Décret-Rouillard, 2024). Moreover, Snapchat's ability to mask, reshape and make up certain imperfections explains its appropriation by young girls, who are in the process of staging and enhancing their self-image (Goffman, 1973).

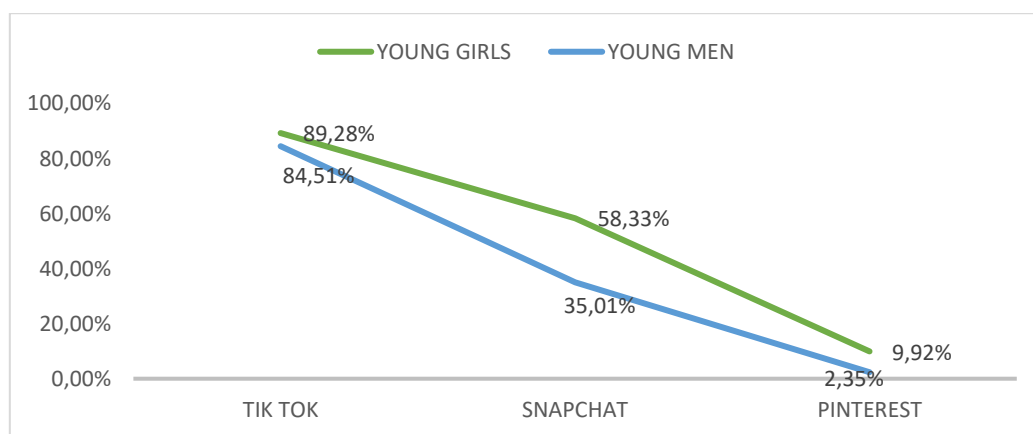


Figure 4. The most popular social media for young girls after WhatsApp (Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data)

Unlike other social media, the ephemeral nature of the content they share allows them to escape the social control that might be exercised over their publications, particularly by their parents. The development of both Snapchat and Instagram reflects this change in usage, with the visual taking precedence over the textual (Clapaud, 2015). These platforms are also real social networking tools for young girls of generation Z.

3.2. Digital skills

Digital technologies have the potential to transform society, particularly in terms of gender equality, by promoting the inclusion of young girls and enabling them to participate in decision-making (Leroy 2020). However, it has to be said that the digital divide between women and men persists and mainly concerns digital skills. This can be understood as the ability to make full use of digital technologies to seize practical and symbolic opportunities (Granjon, 2012). The complexity of tasks is thought to contribute to the social reproduction of digital inequalities. *"Far from being an escape from the gender relations that structure offline life, the digital world does seem to be rife with power relations, inequalities and struggles that we see elsewhere, and which it often even accentuates."* (Bergström, Pasquier, 2019)

The aim is to examine the digital skills of young people. What would be the impact of socialising young girls to the digital world? Looking at the development of digital skills means shaking up and deconstructing social representations of digital professions. Understood as the power to act, empowerment appears to be the "process by which an individual or group acquires the means to strengthen its capacity for action, to emancipate itself" (Bacqué, 2005). Even if access were guaranteed, there would be stages of use that would not facilitate mastery by users, particularly with a view to their empowerment. The challenge of digital skills is such that it can empower young girls in particular, in a variety of areas.

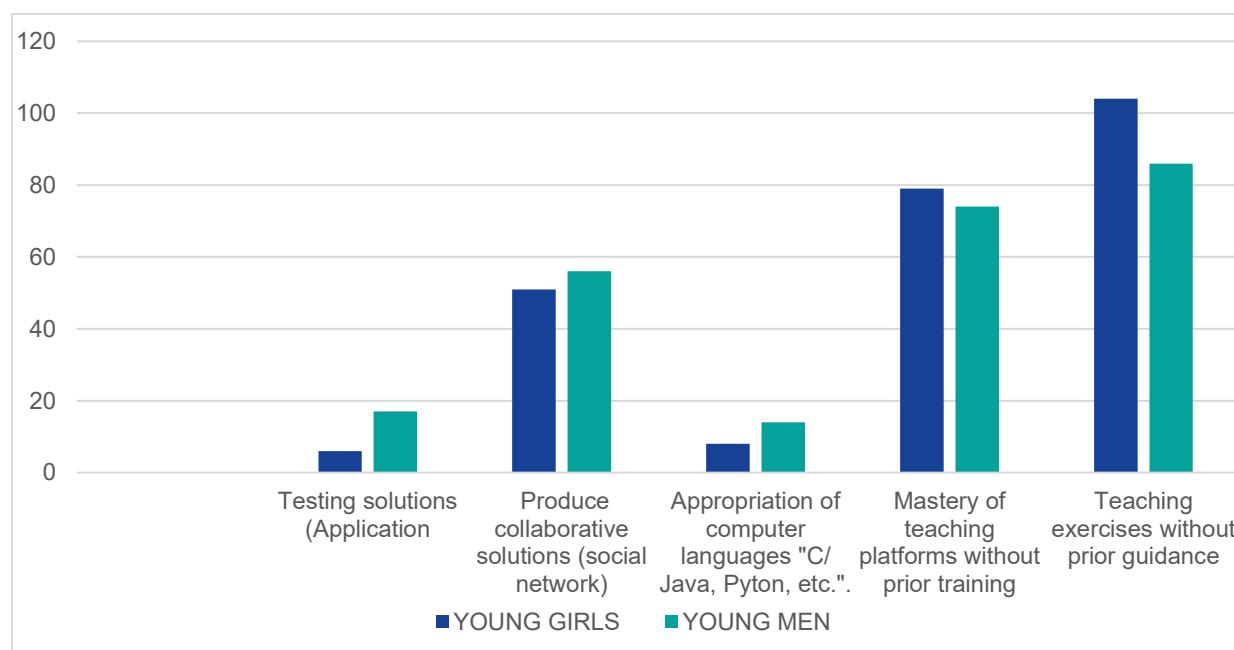


Figure 5. Breakdown of advanced digital skills (*Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data*)

The figure below shows the online games that are more likely to interest young men than young women. These include football betting, Fornite, FIFA 23, GTA and Call of Duty, which mainly involve interaction with other players from different countries. By organising online competitions and tournaments, young men can 'rub shoulders' virtually with other young people from other countries and assess their level of play. Young people seem to have a greater appetite for risk. Gambling has become a 'social' activity because it can be played alone or with others.

"The entrenchment of male domination in the world of video games, both in terms of creation and practice". (Bergström, Pasquier, 2019).

3.2.1. Young girls and smartphone gaming: a new connexion?

Games, whether on smartphones or consoles, help to diversify social interactions, designed to help individuals build their identity. Through games, we learn to manage conflict, respect the rules, wait our turn, learn empathy, collaboration and creativity, deal with frustration when we lose, and so on. These are all essential values that should enable you to remain part of the social group to which you belong. In short, digital technology, as a tool for socialisation, helps to develop social skills, making it easier to live together. The social utility of toys is that they help to assimilate the rules of life in society, because play is fully a social activity because of the interactions that take place during play. It should be noted that the field of digital games is

becoming less and less compartmentalised, and does not always respect the gender divide, particularly with smartphones.

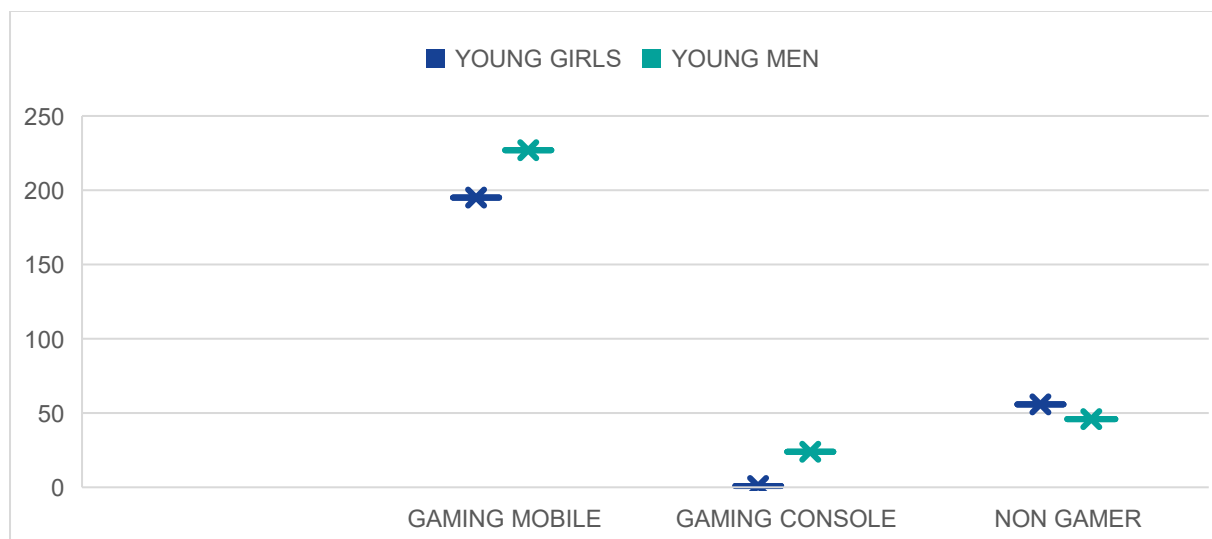


Figure 6. Distribution of gaming modes (*Source: DigiSen 2024 survey data*)

Nevertheless, console games remain the preserve of young men. Sports and combat games are socially and culturally more attractive to men than to girls. Game modes by medium reveal that console games are used exclusively by men. The figure 6 show that smartphone games are very popular with young girls. It should not be forgotten that there is a category of young people who are not gamers. "The development of smartphone games has contributed significantly to the feminisation of gaming" (Gire, Granjon, 2012). This brings us back to the nagging question of the transmission of values that should enable individuals to live in society and create social links, at the risk of being considered as outsiders.

4. Discussion

The gender and digital perspective aim to analyse the reproduction of inequalities, empowerment and the maintenance of social relationships through the use of digital technologies. This sociology of young people's digital uses offers a key to understanding young people's practices, whatever the type of neighbourhood (residential, suburban or mixed). Digital technology appears to be a place where people's positions are redistributed, but also where there is a hierarchy of positions. It's an area where values and norms collide. In terms of digital practices, the digital space can be seen as a field of forces that requires the possession of capital, particularly digital capital, in order to move within it.

This means that to stay in the digital space, young people need to develop strategies to ensure that they always have access to high-performance digital tools, such as quality smartphones, and that they can guarantee a good quality connection. Every field has its laws, and the digital field is no exception. In the social sciences, a 'generation' is a sociological concept used by demographers to designate a sub-population whose members are roughly the same age or have lived through the same historical period, and who share a certain number of practices and representations because they belong to the same period or because they are the same age (Gérard Mauger 2015). The latter is much more explicit when he refers to the concept of 'generational habitus'.

This definition takes us back to the characteristics of Generation Z, a generation born with access to the internet, easy access to information and the age of social media. These young people have the ability to connect with each other, from one end of the globe to the other, and to use the same means of communication. These digital natives are at the heart of a new relationship with skills and knowledge, and use the smartphone as a tool for socialisation.

For Durkheim, education is "the methodical socialisation of the younger generation by their elders", but the novelty and complexity of digital technologies means that parents are finding themselves on the learning bench. The model of parents as the dominant holders of knowledge and know-how is being superseded.

The way in which knowledge is passed on has been turned on its head. What's more, thanks to the daily use of digital tools, this generation has developed a great deal of autonomy: it can learn and know everything on its own. There is a gradual process of deconstructing the model received from parents and reconstructing it from their own sources. The same observation was made by Delecluse and Gentina (2018), who argue that the advent of new technologies is helping to give young people more power within their families. For example, they show their elders how to use new technologies. Young people of this generation check and compare all the 'knowledge' and 'know-how' that is passed on to them. They use computers on a daily basis and can't imagine life without them.

They give more credit and trust to digital media than to 'traditional' media. The question of knowledge acquisition arises because the handling of a large quantity of information does not necessarily mean an increase in knowledge. Digital technology allows young people to update their "knowledge". The Internet is a very specific form of knowledge about all areas of life, an active medium where everyone feeds the information according to their own representations, their own system of values. The circulation of knowledge on the Internet provides a framework for exchanging values and sharing personal experiences. It is a very specific and collective knowledge, a foundation that constitutes common knowledge.

However, as David le Breton (2008) points out, it's important to keep things in perspective, because their education is often less a matter of school than of the playful culture provided by the media, which fuels their vision of the world and their values. They manipulate a lot of information without necessarily increasing their knowledge, because they believe that knowledge is constantly being updated. The growing importance of social media is triggering a battle for information and communication among young people. The concept of community takes on its full meaning with the advent of social media.

The Internet and social media enable young people from different backgrounds to get in touch with each other, opening up the world and an ever-wider range of possibilities. They have become an integral part of young people's lives, providing answers to all their questions. What's more, the fact that young people go online with a smartphone has an impact on their practices. The use of smartphones limits certain practices (Beland, Muphy, 2016), the means of social control are informal, and any individual who does not respect the norms suffers the disapproval of the group, and may be mocked, excluded from conversations, reprimanded, etc. (Beland, Muphy, 2016).

The digital native's group would be based on objective criteria defining the category, such as having ways of being, feeling and acting specific to the group of young girls from the urban environment of Saint-Louis. Belonging to the digital native's group would be based on objective criteria defining the category, such as having ways of being, feeling and acting specific to the group of young girls from the urban environment of Saint-Louis. Belonging to a group induces

expectations on the part of other agents: members of the group but also any other individual with whom they interact.

The social role corresponds to the behaviour expected by peers and others. The feeling of belonging is forged by the feeling of not belonging to other groups. Social interactions therefore situate individuals within groups. What's more, young people build their identity on the interactions they have with their peer group and with society as a whole. As Goffman (1973) reminds us through the concept of idealisation during interactions, individuals will always show themselves in a new light, with the desire to pass themselves off as someone else in public, while resorting to subterfuge to hide their game. With digital technology at the heart of gendered social practices, socialisation is being rethought and even reinvented.

5. Conclusion

It is still essential to go back over the main contributions of this article. In this respect, the digital daily lives reveal that young girls are less involved in the management of their neighbourhoods and towns, and that young men are better at mastering complex tasks requiring digital skills. The democratisation of the smartphone, the main digital technology tool available to all the young people surveyed, has had a definite impact on reducing the digital divide. An approach to digital technology in terms of field and capital highlights a series of interactions and implications. By way of illustration, the organisation of gaming tournaments between young men from here and elsewhere tends to show the open nature of this field.

Entertainment is at the heart of the digital practices of 18–24-year-olds, whatever their level of education. Given the limited digital skills of some young people, the choice of easy-to-use platforms was more conducive to their empowerment. Digital practices do indeed follow a gender logic, confirming our initial hypothesis. Our approach is in line with the renewal of the issue of gendered digital uses linked to social inequalities in access to digital skills.

Gendered digital practices obey the logic of social practices. This was our initial hypothesis. In the light of the results obtained, we can confirm that digital practices are indeed an extension of social practices, or even an accentuation of them. Involvement in associations or politics is the poor relation of young people's digital practices, whatever their sex. Hence the need to empower young people digitally in an attempt to diversify their various uses and enable them to familiarise themselves with other issues such as digital civic engagement, which remains low among young people in general, and even lower among young women. Digital capital is a matter of self-acquisition. Unlike the classic fields developed by Bourdieu, the digital field remains unlimited, particularly for young people who have not attended school, with the advent of AI opening up new research prospects.

Use of Generative AI

The authors did not use artificial intelligence tools to improve the text in any way.

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is committed to supporting a research program called TYPCities - technology and youth participation in urban governance. It promotes the inclusion of youth voices and the equitable use of digital technology. The program involves five research projects worldwide and local-ized in seven countries (Senegal, Nepal, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Colombia Jamaica). This research program encompasses five projects designed to understand the potential and actual impacts of technology on young people in cities in low- and middle-income countries, by analyzing how technology can be used to enable young people to participate in the governance of their cities.

In the case of Senegal, an interdisciplinary project combining engineering and social sciences will run from 2023 to 2026, entitled "Digital policies, infrastructure development and youth participation in Saint-Louis and Ziguinchor", studying the digital practices of young people, with a focus on social and spatial inequalities in digital access in medium-sized towns in Senegal. The consortium comprises four professors and seven postdoctoral researchers from three institutions. They include experts from the Communauté d'Etudes pour l'Aménagement du Territoire (CEAT) at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland, the Ecole Supérieure Polytechnique (ESP) and the Uni-versité Gaston Berger (UGB) in Senegal.

They have developed methodologies that combine quantitative and qualitative analyses based on spatial data and drive tests or crowdsourcing. The research data collected will be shared and used by all partners in the research project. Also, the results include an updated picture of digital access and practices in the cities of Saint-Louis and Ziguinchor, and will be presented to young people through social media platforms and exhibitions.

Conflict of Interest

"The authors report there are no competing interests to declare."

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