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Active audience?: interaction of young people with television and online video content

Abstract

This article examines the different ways of interaction that young people have with television and online video content. Inspired by Van Dijck's argument (2009), that there is a misleading assumption to define the audience in terms of passive recipients related to old media (e.g. television) and active participants who are internet users, the aim of this study is, firstly, to analyze if there are differences related to the type of medium; and, secondly, to examine if it is possible to develop an audience interaction typology in relation to television and video content. The study presents the most significant statistical results of a survey of 475 students conducted at Mondragon University. After carrying out a factorial analysis, two multiple generalized linear regressions and a cluster analysis, our results show that it is statistically impossible to describe the audience's attitude as a dichotomy between passive television viewers and active internet users. Likewise, it is not possible to develop an audience interaction typology in relation to television and video content. The results rather show a multifarious profile of activity patterns related to specific contents and interactive practices on the Web. This study illustrates the complexity of content, context and audience practices in the new media environment.

Keywords

Television, internet, video content, interaction, young audience, audience activity

1. Introduction

The audience of television and online video content is profiled differently in the media ecosystem of the 21st century, in which various factors that influence the manner of watching audiovisual contents and interacting with them come together. Thanks to the digitalization of television and the expansion of broadband internet, the supply of contents has multiplied exponentially, and the fragmentation of the audience is such that some authors suggest that the term "audience" (understood as a collective of people and not as the sum of individuals) should be abandoned as an "outdated" concept (Carpentier, Schröder &

Hallet, 2014). On the contrary, Napoli (2010) maintains that the audience, as a concept, is evolving. With the appearance of new screens, habits of television consumption have diversified and become personalized: part of the audience has migrated toward other devices that allow consumption anywhere and at any time; furthermore, multitasking with two or more screens is common, especially among young people (Foehr, 2006; Venturini, Mishra & Carlier, 2013; Flores-Ruiz & Humanes-Humanes, 2014). On the other hand, internet users find on platforms like YouTube a source of video content that is wide and diverse, both in its subjects and in its origins (Burgess & Green, 2009; Ofcom, 2014; Gauntlett, 2015).

The experience of the audience in the environment of the Web 2.0 is increasingly multidimensional and interactive (Schröder et al., 2003). Curtin (2009) calls “matrix media” to this form of communication that is more and more flexible and dynamic, while Jenkins popularized the term “convergence culture” to refer to this new communicative panorama in which “consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content” (Jenkins, 2006: 3). With the paradigm shift driven by the internet and Web 2.0, unidirectional media communication (one-to-many) is beginning to coexist with communication among peers (many-to-many), which Castells (2009) calls “mass self-communication” (see also Livingstone, 2004; Jensen, 2012).

Even though in today’s new panorama one-to-many communication continues to play a central role in the daily life of the audience (Carpentier & De Cleen, 2008; Hess et al., 2012; Bury & Li, 2015), there has been a notable increase both in the activity of said audience (Livingstone, 2013) and in its autonomy when it comes to producing content (Napoli, 2010; Strangelove, 2011; Carpentier, Schröder & Hallet, 2014; Gauntlett, 2015). Users nowadays have a greater ability to interact with the media thanks to the relatively easy use of technology and to advances in technological connectivity. In this setting, in which the audience carries out other kinds of activities that go beyond pure reception, new terms are emerging for concepts such as *prosumer* (Toffler, 1980), to define a consumer/user who produces content or *producer*, in the case of collaborative productions (Bruns, 2008; Bruns & Schmidt, 2011).

This new environment is the framework for the participatory culture described by Jenkins (2006) and the participatory audience defined by Livingstone (2013), and increasingly studies mention the audience in terms of participation (Li, 2007; Ardevol et al., 2010; García-Avilés, 2012; Quintas & Gonzalez, 2014; Noguera Vivo et al., 2014; van Es, 2016). Yet there is also need to keep audience activity in perspective since not all users interact, nor can all of them be called “prosumer” (Jenkins, 2006; Hargittai & Walejko, 2008; Vainikka & Herkman, 2013; O’Neill et al., 2014). Or, in the words of Bolin (2010: 74): “the fact that digitization produces opportunities for audience participation does not mean that audiences accept the offer.”

With this in mind Carpentier and Dahlgren (2011) are critical of overworking the concept of *participation*, as a black box of meanings in which, in Carpentier’s words (2011: 14), “participation is still used to mean everything and nothing”. Carpentier maintains that participation is not the same as access and interaction; the author proposes a model for differentiating them and concludes that although access and interaction are necessary conditions for media participation, the former cannot be confused with or diluted by the latter, since it is understood that “participation” means having the power to make decisions, both with respect to content, and at the institutional or organizational level (Carpentier, 2011; Carpentier & De Cleen, 2008).

Elsewhere Van Dijck (2009) notes that the concept of user often rests on the misleading belief in a dichotomy between the passive receptor grounded in the traditional media, and the active participant, a technologically very competent user of the new media. Along the same lines, Carpentier, Schröder and Hallet (2014) warn of the danger of conferring upon

the term *user* a proactive meaning *per se*. In this dichotomy between the passivity of the traditional media recipient and the active behavior required by the new media, Van Dijck (2009) contends that there are two underlying assumptions whose importance is worth playing down. First, there is the participation of an audience bound to the new media and the conferral upon that participation of the status of novelty. However, historical studies show that this is not a new phenomenon; such studies speak of a participatory audience, both before the mass communication media (Butsch, 2000) and after they were established (Griffen-Foley, 2004). And second, it is assumed that the television viewer is passive before the television screen; nevertheless, the passivity of television viewers cannot be generalized, as shown by studies on the activity of television fans (see, for example, Jenkins, 2013).

Although the historical novelty of the active behaviour of the audience is questionable, and the use of the concept of participation with respect to the activities of the audience remains open for discussion, what is indeed novel are the interactive possibilities offered by the new media, which serve as facilitators of interaction among users in addition to offering interactive possibilities with the contents themselves. Livingstone contends that while “the active audience of traditional media has probably been pushed as far as it can go, [...] interactive media [referring to the internet] put such activity at the center of both media design and media use” (1999: 63). In the same sense, some authors (Kim & Sawhney, 2002; Lee & Andrejevic, 2014; Scolari, 2008) speak of the complicated challenge for the television industry of changing a “passive” medium into an active one. The intrinsic “passivity” of traditional television has been counteracted by the television industry with multi-platform strategies, thanks to technological convergence (García-Avilés, 2012; Lee & Andrejevic, 2014), and by providing transmedia content (Jenkins, 2006; Askwith, 2007; Bolin, 2007; Scolari, 2013; Simons, 2014).

Just as technological convergence blurs the boundaries among the different media, the framework that is created among them makes it difficult to assess the audience’s activity. Svoen (2007) speaks of the complex context of the audience in the converging – and sometimes diverging – media environment in which its members interact. The same receivers of media make use of both the “old” media and the “new” (Bardoel, 2007), for which reason it is not easy to clearly define this classification. Costello and Moore (2007) state that the concept of the activity of the audience is not an absolute condition, but rather a variable state that depends on determinants as diverse as the individuals, the contents, and the context. Wilson (2015) in turn argues that audience attention varies depending on the genre of the contents, the social circumstances, and the individual’s state of mind.

In recent years various studies have been carried out that categorize both the ways offered to the audience for its interaction with the media – Siapera (2004) and García-Avilés (2012), for example, focus on television – and the levels of activity adopted by that audience (Li, 2007; Green & Patel, 2013; Ballano, Uribe & Munté-Ramos, 2014; Berrocal, Campos-Dominguez & Redondo, 2014; Sánchez Martínez & Ibar, 2015; among others).

With respect to the active behavior of the audience, the concept of *user-generated content* (UGC) is particularly relevant as it is the activity that requires the greatest media engagement by the audience. To elucidate the meaning of this concept that has been so profusely used in the past decade, we must remember the three criteria mentioned by Napoli (2010: 78): “(a) content made publicly available over the internet; (b) content that reflects a certain amount of creative effort; and (c) content that is created outside of traditional professional routines and practices.” Napoli maintains that in UGC discussions, the focus is often mistakenly placed on the users’ ability to produce, when in fact users’ capacity to produce contents is been around for some years thanks to technologies like the typewriter, the camera, the computer, and the video recorder. According to Napoli (2010), it is the possibility of making this production public that is truly novel. On this point, it is important to remember that García and Valdivia (2014) differentiate between sharing

content and spreading it, specifying that spreading refers to the open and public circulation of content. Moreover, it is precisely the phenomenon of spreading that is underlined by authors like Jenkins, Ford and Green (2013) in their development of Jenkins' (2006) concept of participatory culture in the field of distribution.

In the ever-changing media environment, a number of authors agree on the necessity of continuing to conduct empirical audience research (Livingstone, 2004; Evans, 2011; Gray & Lotz, 2012; Wilson, 2015). Additionally, Hassoun (2014) suggests that the academy should carry out more empirical research, since most studies are conducted by companies that work for the industry.

2. Investigating audience activity: a proposal for analysis

2.1. Objectives

The aim of the research presented in this article is to analyze the way in which the audience is active with television and online video content, and what kinds of activities audiences engage in. The study is based on two hypotheses: the first hypothesis is inspired by the dichotomy of the audience mentioned by Van Dijck (2009), who maintains that it is misleading to assume that the user behaves passively during television consumption and more actively on internet; the second hypothesis is that the scale of interaction has a gray area which is complex and diverse, whereby it is not possible to build an audience typology.

With these two working hypotheses in mind, two research questions were formulated:

RQ1 : Can it be said in relation to audiovisual content that the audience may have a passive attitude towards television, and an active attitude towards internet?

RQ2 : Is it possible to create a typology of audience interaction in relation to television and video content?

Keeping in mind that the purpose of this research is limited to the activities described in Carpentier's model (2011) as "interactions," in the present study we will avoid the use of the term "participation" in favor of the term "interaction." Furthermore, given that this investigation of the audience focuses on interaction with (and in relation to) content, the work of Napoli (2010) helps us to describe more precisely the interaction that is the object of the present research, which includes both basic content search activities and other more advanced activities relating to giving opinions and sharing contents, placing the generation of new contents – in our case video contents – at the highest level of interaction.

We chose to study young people since they were born and grew up in a media context that is diverse and technologically adapted to the internet era, and therefore will potentially show more active behavior with respect to the media. In Spain, and more specifically, in the Basque Autonomous Community, young people between the ages of 16 and 24 are the primary users of the internet (Eustat, 2014; INE, 2015). The relationship between young people and the emerging media has been observed through various historical studies on the media (Evans, 2011) given that, as early adopters of new technologies, they could serve as predictors for the future habits of a wider population (Barkhuus, 2009; Simons, 2014), as long as the technological resources and the socio-economic status of the societies are equivalent to those of the present study.

In this sense, Bolin and Westlund (2009), after conducting a five-year longitudinal study, conclude that the media habits of young people are generational, since no significant changes are observed with increasing age and the subsequent life changes.

2.2. Methodology

The present article presents the results obtained from quantitative data gathered in a survey completed between March 24 and May 12, 2014. Cluster sampling provided information from 475 students ($n=475$; $Z=1.95$; $e=\pm 4.1\%$) from the four faculties (Humanities and Education, Engineering, Business Studies and Gastronomic Sciences) of Mondragon University. Given that the purpose of this study was to investigate the types of interactivity of the audience with television and video content, it was essential that all participants in the study had access to some form of technology that allowed them to have that interactivity. Therefore, 12 subjects who had no access to any technology with internet connection were eliminated, leaving a total number of subjects of 463. Of the 463 questionnaires analyzed 55% were completed by women and 45% by men, with the ages of all participants falling primarily (95%) between 18 and 24.

The survey, which consisted of 43 questions, was based on previous works (Bondad-Brown, 2011; Arango-Forero, 2013; Pavón-Arrizabalaga, 2014) and was designed *ad hoc* for a wider investigation that is currently underway. It was validated by two experts in the field, and tested on 38 students. The questionnaire was organized into 7 sections, with questions grouped as follows:

- Section 1, on television and video consumption: questions about the type of content watched and time consumption, both on television and through internet (whether by streaming or downloading content from the Web).
- Section 2, on interaction with television: questions regarding the use of second screens while watching television and the internet consumption of extra contents of television programs.
- Section 3, on interaction with videos through internet: questions referring to activities related to the “like” function of social networks, to comments made on the networks about video content and to the activity of sharing that content different ways (social networks, email, instant messaging, etc.).
- Section 4, on video production: questions regarding content production (whether one’s own recordings or remixes of other people’s content), as well as its distribution through internet.
- The remaining sections included questions about social networks and applications for sharing audiovisual content (Section 5); technological appropriation (Section 6); and demographic information/identification (gender, age, etc.) of the participants (Sections 7).

In order to classify the levels of activity and remain consistent with Napoli’s (2010) description, we opted for three general levels based on studies by Bolin (2012), Green and Patel (2013) and Ballano, Uribe and Munté-Ramos (2014). Level differentiation among some activities is diffuse, for which reason it is difficult to arrive at a more detailed objective classification. This is the case, for example, of activities such as “liking” something, commenting on something, or sharing contents.

Thus, defining levels from less active to more active, at the first level we find *viewing* (Section 1 on the questionnaire), at the second or intermediate level are activities related to *sharing* such as “liking” something, commenting on something, and sharing contents (Section 3), and the highest level concerns the *creation* of video content to later share it through internet (Section 4 of the survey). Section 2 of the questionnaire takes a different tenor due to the fact that, as mentioned in the Introduction above, television consumption has been associated with more passive behaviors; thus, we wanted to place special attention on activities related to television, both in order to investigate the forms of traditional television consumption that occur simultaneously with the use of a second screen, and to examine extra television searches beyond what is offered by television programming.

2.3. Data analysis

For analysis, data were subjected primarily to the reduction of variables technique through a principle components analysis (PCA) with *varimax* rotation. To respond to our stated objectives, we used 57 variables of the 152 included on the questionnaire, and selected variables related both to audiovisual consumption and to the practices that are carried out around it (Table 1); all of these variables were ordinal (5–point Likert scale).

Table 1. Variables used in the Principal Components Analysis

Survey section	Number of variables	Description of the variables
1	12	Type and genre of videos consumed through internet. Frequency of downloading videos, movies and series through internet, to view at a later time.
2	17	Technological devices used for multitasking and activities carried out, both associated and not associated with television. Frequency of use of web resources (social networks, blogs, webpages and applications), of television content, and the purpose of their use. Importance given to the possibility of interaction offered by the television program.
3	16	Interaction with online videos (“liking” or commenting). Types of videos shared through internet and frequency of sharing.
4	8	Frequency of creating video content (whether one’s own recordings or remixes), and of sharing them via the Web.
5	4	Frequency of use of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp.

Source: Own elaboration

Once the components to study were defined, we carried out generalized multiple linear regressions (generalized linear model, GLM) in order to determine if the patterns of audiovisual consumption varied as a function of television consumption or video consumption on the internet (RQ₁). In the first regression, daily television consumption (average of 115 minutes) was a dependent variable, and the second, daily consumption of videos on internet (average of 90 minutes); both of these were ordinal variables (6–point Likert scale). The components of the factorial analysis were used as independent variables, together with two descriptive variables (age, gender). Finally, in the first regression we linked internet consumption with television consumption, and used the opposite link in the second regression, in order to determine whether there was a significant relationship between these two consumptions.

To analyze whether it is possible to devise an audience typology based on their interactive practices (RQ₂) a hierarchical cluster analysis (HCA) was conducted using the *Ward* method. This analysis divided the sample into different groups depending on the frequency of the practices described in the components (see Table 5). Thus, in each sample group PCA components are distributed depending on whether the practice described in each component is more or less common.

All data were analyzed using the statistics program SPSS and the R programming environment.

3. Interaction of the audience in the era of audiovisual digitalization

3.1. Description of the patterns of audiovisual consumption

The PCA with 57 variables from the questionnaire (KMO=0.86) identified 10 components that explain 56% of the total variance. This grouping of variables describes the patterns of

audiovisual consumption around different audiovisual formats and contents (for summary see Table 2):

- Component 1 (C1), multi-platform television content: this refers to the use of a second screen for activities related to television content while watching television, and to the use of social networks, blogs or webpages of favorite television programs. This component also includes internet viewing of extra content or content not broadcast on television, as well as searches for extra information on television content. An average of 73.36% of those surveyed stated that they never or almost never carry out these activities.

This group also describes the importance that the audience awards to the level of interaction offered by a television program: 30.67% of those surveyed did not think this is important, 37.80% were neutral, and 31.10% thought it was important for a television program to offer the chance to interact with the content. Finally, the use of the social network Twitter falls into this category as well.

- Component 2 (C2), the use of a second screen: this component describes the activities carried out in multitasking with a computer, tablet or smartphone while watching television. The variables grouped in this component were related to multitasking practices that were not related to television. Of the young people surveyed, 49.02% said that they carry out other activities using a second screen while watching television. The use of a smartphone and a laptop computer stand out at 65.01% and 33.04%, respectively, in comparison with the use of a tablet, which reached only 7.56%. This marginal use of the tablet can be understood if we bear in mind the fact that only 33.41% of those surveyed have access to this technology, in contrast with 98.04% who have access to a laptop and 96.30% with access to a smartphone.

- Component 3 (C3), online video consumption I: in this group we find the variables that refer to the consumption of films and television programs, and drama in particular. Also in this group is the practice of downloading video content through different internet platforms. Here, 36.06% of those surveyed said they often watch television programs online and 65.65% watch films and TV drama on internet. Downloading these contents from platforms – particularly free ones, but also paid ones – is a common practice for 48.57% of the young people surveyed.

- Component 4 (C4), online video consumption II: variables related to the consumption of content produced by mass media, other than film and television industries. With respect to genres, this component includes short news bulletins, music videos and tutorials. The frequent consumption of information and music videos online reached 75.27%, and that of tutorials was 40.60%. The use of the YouTube platform and the WhatsApp application fall into this category, and they are used frequently by 89.77% and 95.47% of young people, respectively.

- Component 5 (C5), online video consumption III: refers to amateur content on internet, with the genre of humor standing out. Of those respondents, 44.6% state that they consume amateur videos on internet, and 47.73% regularly watch humorous videos.

- Component 6 (C6), online video consumption IV: the pattern of the consumption of sports videos on internet is different from that of the other previous components, to such an extent that this unique variable is isolated as a whole, single component. Although the consumption of sports is equal to that of the other genres, the percentage of young people who never or almost never watch this type of content is greater (20.95%) compared with the percentage who say they never consume other genres. Furthermore, and unlike the case of other genres, the consumption of sports videos is an exclusively male practice since the majority of males (51.39%) state that they watch sports frequently, while the majority of females (68.44%) say they never or almost never watch sports.

- Component 7 (C7), giving opinions on videos: describes the ways of interacting with video content on internet, such as “liking” a video or comment about it, and shows frequent

use among 31.32% of young people. Together with this activity, this component includes the social network Facebook, whose use reaches 84.08%.

- Component 8 (C8), sharing video content: refers to the practices of sharing all types of video content and genres through different platforms, social networks or webpages on the internet. Of the university students surveyed, 21.32% frequently share all types of content, 25.6% share moderately, and 53.08% never or almost never share videos online. These videos are shared above all through WhatsApp (48.16%) and Facebook (45.37%), while a few people (6.47%) use email for this purpose.

- Component 9 (C9), the creation of videos: this group includes the variables that refer to video production, in order to share them later through different internet routes. Compared with the 8.43% and 25.70%, respectively, of those who create and share their own content with high or moderate frequency, most young people (65.87%) state that they are not active producers of video content. With a greater difference than that in the previous component, the videos are shared largely via WhatsApp (53.21%), after which come Facebook (33.84%) and email (12.95%).

- Component 10 (C10), the creation of remix videos: variables that refer to the creation of videos starting with other people's content and then re-editing it in order to give a new meaning to the edited content. The great majority (93.52%) of those surveyed stated that they never or almost never carry out this activity.

Table 2. Summary of the components of the PCA

Component	Description	Level of activity
1	Multi-platform television content consumption	Viewing
2	Use of a second screen on TV viewing	
3	Online consumption of films and television programs	
4	Online mass media consumption other than films and television programs: music videos, news and tutorials	
5	Online amateur video consumption and humorous videos	
6	Online consumption of sports videos	
7	Giving opinions on videos	Sharing
8	Sharing video content	
9	Video content creation	Creation
10	Creation of remix video	

Source: Own elaboration

3.2. Active or passive audience?

The generalized multiple linear regressions (Tables 3 and 4) show that it is not possible to statistically define two fully differentiated profiles of television and video consumption, nor active and passive activities or practices with audiovisual contents, using exposure to television (as a passive profile) and the consumption of video content on internet (as an active profile) as the basis for differentiation. Nevertheless, the data show significant relationships that are worth mentioning.

Both interaction with television content on internet (C1) and the use of a second screen (C2) were found to be significantly related to television exposure (Table 3) such that the most frequent practice of these elements was associated with greater television exposure. A significant relationship was also found with the consumption of sports on internet (C6) and

the production of content that is then shared online (C9). On the other hand, there was a slight negative relationship between traditional television consumption and the consumption of other mass media content such as news or musicals on internet, as well as the use of YouTube and WhatsApp (C4).

Table 3. GLM. Television consumption

Independent variable	Standard coefficient	Standard error	t-value	Significance
(Intercept)	2.029	0.644	3.150	<0.001
Internet	0.092	0.0736	1.246	0.213
Age	0.046	0.029	1.555	0.121
Gender (2=male)	-0.238	0.13660	-1.746	0.081
C1	0.323	0.057	5.645	<0.001
C2	0.225	0.058	3.890	<0.001
C3	-0.101	0.058	-1.756	0.079
C4	-0.182	0.058	-3.141	0.002
C5	-0.063	0.057	-1.112	0.267
C6	0.253	0.064	3.944	<0.001
C7	-0.049	0.060	-0.807	0.419
C8	0.037	0.057	0.651	0.515
C9	0.133	0.059	2.230	0.026
C10	-0.026	0.058	-0.451	0.652

Source: Own elaboration

With respect to the relationship between audiovisual practices and the amount of time spent on video consumption on internet (Table 4), it should be pointed out that there is a significant relationship between the amount of time that young people spend watching video content on the internet and the practice of sharing that content online (C8). It should also be emphasized that, as in the case of television exposure, those who consume the most video content on internet are those who create the most videos and then share them online (C9). Similarly, there was a positive relationship between the consumption of television programs, films and TV drama (C3) and video exposure on the internet. Online amateur content, particularly humorous content (C5), was also significantly related to video exposure on internet. On the other hand, consumers of sports videos were found to invest the least amount of time watching online content (C6).

Table 4. GLM. Audiovisual consumption on internet

Independent variable	Standard coefficient	Standard error	t-value	Significance
(Intercept)	2.067	0.410	5.039	<0.001
Television	0.038	0.031	1.246	0.213
Age	-0.026	0.019	-1.330	0.184
Gender (2=male)	0.043	0.089	0.484	0.628
C1	0.031	0.0384	0.816	0.415
C2	0.059	0.038	1.564	0.118
C3	0.092	0.037	2.475	0.013
C4	0.049	0.038	1.293	0.197
C5	0.117	0.037	3.210	0.001
C6	-0.112	0.042	-2.674	0.007
C7	0.029	0.039	0.734	0.463

C8	0.093	0.037	2.519	0.012
C9	0.195	0.038	5.184	<0.001
C0	0.025	0.037	0.670	0.503

Source: Own elaboration

3.3. Is audience typology possible?

The *Ward* hierarchical cluster analysis describes six different groups in the sample of university students (see Table 5). Each group is divided into three values distributed at high (> 0.4), medium ($-0.4 - 0.4$) and low (< -0.4), and the components of the PCA are segmented into these values depending on whether the practices are more or less frequent (higher values refer to frequent practices and lower ones to less frequent practices).

The results show patterns predominated by medium values so, although there are slight differences in the practices of young people, overall the general pattern is quite similar. In addition, PCA components divide in such a way that it is not possible to differentiate a range of profiles for either more active or less active practices.

Table 5. HCA. Groups and values

Group (% of the sample)	High values >0.4	Medium values -0.4 - 0.4	Low values <-0.4
Group 1 (22.46%)	C3, C8	C1, C2, C4, C6, C7	C5, C9, C10
Group 2 (19.87%)		C1, C3, C4, C5, C8, C9, C10	C2, C6, C7
Group 3 (19.01%)		C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C9, C10	C1, C8
Group 4 (16.63%)	C4, C7, C8, C9	C1, C2, C5, C6	C3, C10
Group 5 (11.88%)	C1, C2, C5	C3, C4, C6, C7, C8, C9, C10	
Group 6 (10.15%)	C9, C10	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8	

Source: Own elaboration

4. Discussion and conclusion

The results obtained in the research confirm the first hypothesis that there is no passive audience grounded on traditional television that is distinct from an active internet user audience. The audiovisual practices of the audience are not subject to a specific media, so that the same subjects who consume a lot of television may also be those who are more active on the internet.

The evidence for this is the fact that the most active activity examined in the present study – that of creating video content in order to then share it online – is associated with the greatest consumers of both television and internet. Therefore, and consistent with Van Dijk's (2009) argument, it is not correct to associate the audience's active attitudes with the new media, nor can it be concluded that the young television viewer acquires the passive behavior known metaphorically as "couch potato" (Kim & Sawhney, 2002; Schröder et al., 2003; Livingstone, 2004). Rather it can be thought that, as Bardoel (2007) notes, old and new forms of media complement each other, since the audience will use both and select one or the other according to the functionality of each medium and the needs they may have at a given point in time.

As expected, television consumption is most closely associated with multi-platform practices associated with television content. Nevertheless, these practices do not occur frequently among young people. On the other hand, as in other studies (Foehr, 2006; Venturini, Mishra & Carlier, 2013; Flores-Ruiz & Humanes-Humanes, 2014), we describe a multi-platform, multitasking television viewer whose interaction with television content on internet is not always simultaneous with the television broadcast, since the use of a second

screen in front of the television set is often not related to the content offered by the latter. The message sent from the television and marketing industries is that the television experience is amplified and enriched through the social audience and the additional content that television channels offer on internet (Lee & Andrejevic, 2014). However, in light of the above conclusion, the effectiveness of this message is questionable, and it is important to bear in mind that these industries clearly have an interest in showing better audience figures than those reported in traditional measurements of ratings and shares. This conclusion is consistent with the research carried out by Wilson (2015), who adds that the simultaneous use of applications related to television programming depends more on the genre of the program than on the age or gender of the television viewer.

If not all young people interact with video content by sharing their opinion or content through the internet, the number of young people who create video content is even smaller. Therefore, when referring to video creation, the importance of the increase in the production of content by the audience should not be overestimated (Carpentier, Schröder & Hallet, 2014). Furthermore, the data from the present research suggest a greater tendency to spread other people's or commercial content, while one's own content is confined to a more personal and limited range. Although the dividing line between sharing content and spreading it discussed by García and Valdivia (2014) may be vague, it is important to bear it in mind, since spreading content opens the doors to the ecosystem described by Jenkins, Ford and Green (2013), that of many-to-many, while the act of sharing can be limited to a more private range, one-to-one, where content does not ultimately form a part of the media arena.

In this study we analyzed the activity of the audience at three levels: view, share (either the content itself or their opinion about it), and create video content to later share it through internet. Despite the fact that the subjects of the present investigation belong to a group that has the necessary abilities and resources for interaction with the media, our results demonstrate that not all adopt this attitude with respect to television and video content, which is consistent with the conclusions found in other studies (Berrocal, Campos-Dominguez & Redondo, 2014; Simons, 2014). At this point, it is worth mentioning something that various authors have pointed out (Bolin, 2010; Carpentier, 2011; Ballano, Uribe & Munté-Ramos, 2014): the appropriation of technological abilities has an instrumental value that is essential for interaction in the media and with the media, but insufficient when it comes to choosing more active behaviors.

The results also corroborate the second hypothesis, since the statistical work has not led to a typology of audience sufficiently definite to be able to speak of different profiles of youth audience in relation to audiovisual activity. Rather, the present research describes a television and video content landscape that is more and more multidimensional (Schröder et al., 2003) and complex, in which the audience carries out a variety of practices and adopts different attitudes. As noted by Costello and Moore (2007), the audience behaves differently according to content and context, rather than in response to a particular media.

Although the present study provides data that clarifies audience behavior in the era of television and video content digitalization, it had certain limitations. First, even though the sample size was sufficiently large for the results to achieve scientific significance, and it was possible to describe empirically the consumption patterns of young people, the survey had a particular profile since the study was carried out at specific location and at a concrete university. This is a reality that must be kept in mind when interpreting not only the present data but also those of future studies that may compare the present results with their own. Second, the methodology based on the survey can give rise to discrepancies (inevitable, but problematic) between what the participants say they do and what they really do (Livingstone, 2004), for which reason it is recommended to complement the research with qualitative methodologies that help to contextualize the described reality. In this regard, it is

worth mentioning that the present study is part of a wider investigation that combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies, and in which qualitative data are currently being processed for later analysis from diaries and semi-structured interviews for the purpose of delving deeper into areas that have already been investigated quantitatively.

The present research offers a theoretical and empirical base for future studies that may delve more deeply into the relationship between the new media ecosystem and the audience. We also propose a solid statistical model for works that expand the study of new media beyond the audiovisual text. It is for this reason that this type of quantitative research is thought necessary, so that together with qualitative and comparative studies, it will be possible to draw the most detailed picture possible of the new uses the audience makes of the media context in which they find themselves.

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