

# Children and The New Media Literacy

## An Egyptian Case Study

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This study is a part of global study which is funded by the *Academy of Finland*.

Countries: *Finland, Egypt, Argentine & India*

The global study started in Mid 2009 and finished in 2011.

The study in each country includes 2 parts:

- Part 1: Qualitative Research
- Part 2: Quantitative Research

The study in Egypt was carried out in 2 geographical areas :

- 1- Cairo: Urban area (the capital city)
- 2- El Faiyum: Rural area



- ★ Capital City
- ★ Regional Capital City
- Significant City
- Important City - Town
- Attraction - Landmark
- River
- ▲ Highest Point





My presentation for the study includes 3 parts:

- 1- The Situation of Mass Media in Egypt
- 2- Methodology of the study
- 3- Findings of the study



# 1- Mass Media in Egypt

- Print Media
- Radio & TV
- New Media

## **Print Media**

There are 3 important governmental publishing houses which publish tens of newspapers and magazines, in Arabic, English, French and German.

Private and partial newspapers are also numerous.

In all, it is estimated that there are more than 500 newspapers and magazines in Egypt.

Issuance of private and partial newspapers is subject to the approval of the Higher Press Council which is the regulatory organization for the print media.

## Radio & TV

Egyptian Radio and Television Union supervises radio and television. It is a part of the Ministry of Information.

3 national TV channels

7 local channels.

Channel Two, which is a national channel, broadcasts mainly in English and French. It is meant to serve the expatriates who live in Egypt.

Generally speaking the viewer in the Arab World is exposed to a great number of TV channels.

In addition to the land TV channels, there is as many as 696 satellite channels; 97 are owned by governments, and 599 are privately owned. They broadcast through 17 satellites working in the Arab World.

Among the governmental channels 49 are general channels and 48 are specialized.

Children are also exposed to other satellite channels coming from Europe, North America and other parts of the world.

Regarding radio, Egypt has 7 radio networks which are listened to all over the country.

The Overseas Radio Network broadcasts in more than 40 languages.

Moreover, there are local radio stations in different geographical areas of the country.

There are also private radio stations (FM) which broadcast mainly light entertainment and musical programmes which are the most listened to by young people.

# The New Media

- Subscription to mobile phone services amounts to 107%.
- The internet is widely spread in 85% of homes in Cairo and 50% of homes in other areas.

# 2- Methodology

## 1- Interviews

- 36 interviews were carried out in Cairo and Fayoum, with children in 2 age groups: 12 -14 and 16 -18.

The interviews were carried out through 2 stages:

Stage 1: 12 interviews for 14 children (as 2 interviews included 2 in each)  
(Nov. - Dec. 2009)

Stage 2: 24 interviews for 24 children  
(February – March, 2010).

In all 38 children, boys and girls, were interviewed from the 2 geographical areas.

## 2- Diaries

All interviews were recorded with the permission of parents who were assured that all the gathered information will be used only for research purposes and that names of their children won't be mentioned.

On average, each interview lasted for an hour.

The main question handled in these interviews was:

**What kinds of media literacy are the children practicing and developing in different regions of Egypt?**

- In addition to the interviews, 100 diaries were filled by children from Cairo and the rural area (21<sup>st</sup> April, 2010).



# 3- Findings

Findings of the study will be dealt with from 3 aspects:

- Access to the media
- Socioscape
- Genderscape

## **Access to the New Media:**

### **In Cairo:**

It was found all children from Cairo have access to the internet and have mobile phone. Only one boy mentioned that he did have a mobile phone. Parents of children mainly subscribe to the internet through the DSL.

### **In the rural area:**

All boys have mobile phones and access to the internet. Only one girl mentioned that she did not have a mobile phone.

**Age factor** emerged as an important factor with respect to children's use of media:

- Younger children were more interested in games and being visible on line. They were seeing this as a kind of prestige and showing off. They were even creating more stuff on line than the older children.

- Older children were mainly interested in listening to music, watching films and downloading them.

## Socioscape

The social background factor had great impact on Egyptian children's access and dealing with media.

Children from high-income families were more open to talk about many things including intimate things they were doing with the mobile phone or the internet for instance. -

Children from low-income families were less open, and sometimes they were very conservative, especially girls from the rural area. -

- Children from high-income families have access to all media, especially the new media. -

Some children from low-income families, i.e. some girls interviewed from the rural area, did not all have permanent access to the new media. They were using the television and newspapers more than those from high-income families. -

## **Genderscape**

The gender factor influences children's use of the new media. The geographical area was also an influential factor in this respect.

The variation was remarkable between girls from urban and rural areas.

### **Dealing with girls:**

#### ***In Cairo:***

- Girls did not vary from boys with respect to their access to the new media. They were also heavy users of the internet, IPOD and the mobile phone. They Mainly use the mobile phone to stay in touch with their parents and to contact friends and relatives. The father pays for the line in all cases.

- All girls in Cairo have net fitted at homes which was mainly used for playing or chatting with friends.
- “Face Book” and “You Tube” were the most common sites for them. They also use the net to download music and movies.
- Friends were their main sources of information about the visited web sites.
- All girls have email addresses

## *In the rural area:*

- Children's use of the new media was mainly for educational and informative purposes.
- It was also found that girls from the rural areas were using newspapers, magazines and TV more than those from Cairo.
- They also mentioned that they frequently talk about media content with their parents.

## **- Dealing with boys:**

- All boys have had access to the new media for years.
- All boys have mobile phones. The Cairo boys have state-of-the-art mobile phones, latest models, whereas boys from the rural area have older models.
- Boys from Cairo were heavy users of the mobile phone, and at any time of the day. Many of them use it for the net and for messaging friends, even while being at home.
- In the rural area, boys use the mobile phone less, and more rationally. They use mobile phones only for calling parents in cases of emergency. They also use the land line while being at home.
- Generally speaking boys used the mobile phone more than girls.
- The internet was mainly used for chatting. Only a boy uses it for educational purposes. Boys also uses the net to download films, music and songs.
- All Cairo boys know and use the IPOD, whereas in the rural areas, they do not use it. Some has even never heard about it.



## **Budget for the Media**

- In Cairo, the fathers usually pay for their children's mobile phones and air time.
- Some boys indicated that they were given limited air time and then they buy extra air time from their pocket money.
- In the rural area, the fathers pay for their children only for a very limited amount of time on the mobile phones through pre-paid cards.

**Thank you**