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CALL FOR PROPOSALS AND SUBMISSIONS 4/2022

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INVITA

university teachers, researchers, teachers to contribute to the issue number 4/2022 of the journal, dedicated to the topic:

Towards 2050. Promoting a fair digital society for new generations. The role of the school and education

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Children starting school today will be adults in the second half of this century. In other words, we are about to welcome to school a generation of agents from a world whose characteristics we do not yet really know.

With today's strategies and reflections, we trace the outlines of a digital environment in which other generations will spend their adult lives. They are the children who enter school today and who in 2050 will share the world with artificial agents. They will work with and through Artificial Intelligence, will access mostly digitalised public services and increasingly dematerialised experiences.

Will school and education make a significant contribution to onlife, the hybrid digital and real world in which we (will) live?

This call aims to open up a dialogue between policies, analyses, practices and methodologies following different directions to compose a critical, multilevel, interdisciplinary and international investigation on the gaps in digital disciplines. The aim is providing a space for theoretical reflection on the factors that form the basis and on the proposals for constructing a perspective of sustainable digital citizenship for the new generations.

In an increasingly technological and permanently connected society, innovations enter the market of goods and services with a continuous, fast and uninterrupted motion. This is also the case in schools and in formal and informal education.

Yet, the skills necessary for understanding the functioning of platforms and acting in an informed and secure way in the digital environment are increasingly complex. They go beyond the knowledge of using individual tools, such as the ability to distinguish between digital and physical reality, between private and public space, between the human and artificial, between news and opinions, between sensitive data and the right to transparency, etc.

The extensive period of the pandemic and the physical distance imposed have rendered it more evident that the technological society offers many opportunities, even accelerated by the needs to have emerged during the pandemic. It also can impose large costs on society, favour inequalities and gaps between educational, cultural and economic opportunities.

The personal and relational development of individuals and communities is particularly hampered in contexts of digital poverty, where the demand for digital skills – being increasingly indispensable for learning, doing and being – is not met.

Given this scenario, how should the human-technology-education relationship evolve in the transition to a mature digital society? The significant questions, just as an example, can be:

- Does the generational component play a role in the creation of gaps? Are the phenomena of "digital poverty" transversal to age? And what are the unique factors in which they are expressed if they are observed in Generation Z or in subjects in other age groups?
- What impact do gender and origins have on the formation of digital poverty? Does the approach to technology change if the environment helps trigger prejudicial patterns and behavioural biases?

- Are socio-economic factors relevant to the conscious and critical use of digital tools?
- Are there frameworks of risk assessment in place to measure the impacts that technology has, or could have, on teaching and education processes? With what protocols is it possible to predict phenomena of surveillance, violation of fundamental rights, algorithmic biases, etcetera, cultivated through Artificial Intelligence for education?
- How can access to data and the exploitation of information from the data society contribute to improving digital skills, teaching methods and training pathways?

As it is in the tradition and spirit of this journal, there will be taken into consideration macro, meso and micro studies and researches concerning (the following list wants be for example only):

- **Digital environments of Generation Z**

It has been observed that digital natives demonstrate skills in the use of devices, instrumentation and software. On the other hand, they often have merely a basic awareness of the processes behind the operation of digital platforms, social media networks and their underlying algorithms. According to a large amount of research, this concept is stronger especially in contexts of origin (geographical/family) that are disadvantaged from a socio-economic-cultural point of view, in which the education-income-digital skill relationship produces inequalities and significant gaps.

- **Digitization of the professional skills, skills gap in digital tardives and elderly people**

The necessity of professional updating regarding digital skills in educational contexts is just one of the aspects that bring to light the topic of life-long learning. A concerning generational gap between citizen of different ages, whom eventually access to unequal rights and opportunities, is taking place. Besides the access to employment, let's consider, for example, the digitization of public services. Indeed, without a proper digital literacy, the risk of leaving behind digital tardives and elders, excluding them from the benefits offered by the digital society, might emerge.

- **Skills gap between fragile and under-represented groups**

In the digital age, the availability or unavailability of technological skills and knowledge could result in social/economic exclusion, at the expense of women, immigrants and economically disadvantaged people. For instance, the lower women's access to STEM disciplines or ICT professions, if compared to men, could be taken as example. Moreover, prejudices and discriminations among the new generations, might expand the texture of a pre-existing discrepancies.

- **Ethics of Artificial Intelligence**

Increasingly frequent algorithmic bias contributes to reiterate and strengthen former discriminative structures against minorities, vulnerable or under-represented groups, that artificial intelligences inherit from their developers and designers. Without a responsible development of the artificial intelligence, there is the risk to establish a technocracy without governance, especially on its implementation at school and educational fields.

- **The access to data in educational fields**

The technological society produces great amounts of data, which growth underlines the problems related to the management of their information, and the education to personal data as a valuable product. In particular, “Open data” and “Open science” are the main concepts related to the paradigm that make the research data and results accessible. This dataset, gathered and released by public authorities, has a format that make them available, usable and reusable by anyone. The sharing of qualitative and quantitative information, gathered by data, provides a common heritage made out of know-how, good practice and improves the innovation through the collaboration. Under this point of view, data are intended to be a sustainable technological support, useful to governmental actions, such as: the reduction of educational poverty and school dropout, the learning promotion and adaptive didactic, the education to the value of data, the social inclusion and participation.

- **New perspectives: good practice and didactic-educational procedures.**

The educational centres and the formal and the informal training programs have a crucial role in the evolution of the technological society. One of the main aspects that should be considered is the critical study of the emerging good practices or feasible didactic-educational procedures, which includes the analysis of costs and benefits, such as:

- The relational learning between peers in highly connected school contexts, integrated into the professional training for teachers regarding the digital development of female and male students. This focus aims to collect studies/researches/practices structured upon a cross-generational educational relationship set in a digital environment, as well as cooperative processes oriented to the design and evaluation, supported by proper training on mutual reinforcement of the digital skills.
- The digital education as mean of inclusion for students with impairments, special needs education, SEN, and specific learning disorders, SLD. This focus aims to bring together various educational experiences. Among them it's important to mention procedural proposals in matter of innovative didactic or the application of advanced technologies such as robotics. In these experiences, the group dynamics has reinforced, or might enhance, the digital skills of students with disabilities, SEN or SLD, increasing the success of their educational pathway.

- The training and the digital development of teachers in context of rapid technological development. This focus aims to gather experiences, good practices and didactic-educational proposals, in which the educator's training, centred on digital technologies finalized to the teaching and transfer of digital practices, has been successful. This transfer of knowledge might take place through formal and informal channels, and through the collaboration of additional educators' communities (family, school, social networks, public or private subjects, associations, etc.)

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For this topic, QTimes – *Journal of Education, Technology and Social Studies* will examine all papers received.

All proposals must be sent to the email address of the editorial staff: qtimesredazione@gmail.com

It is necessary to indicate the title of the call to which you intend to participate.

Authors are invited to propose scientific papers congruent with the standards of the journal. Please read the authors guidelines.

Dead line:

Abstract proposal: by **July 31th, 2022**

Approval of the abstract: by **August 20th, 2022**

Submission of the paper: by **September 30th, 2022**

Refereeing and communication of the results: by **October 20th, 2022**

Time allowed for changes and modifications requested by Referees, in case of approval: **October 30th, 2022**

Conclusion of editing and publication: **November, 2022**

The proposals will be submitted for referencing through the double-blind technique. The final decision of the International Scientific Committee will be communicated to the authors by e-mail.