Media Education

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Definition: Media Education is an educational discipline focused on critical and conscious engagement with media and their languages. Regarded as complex cultural artifacts, it serves as a preparatory phase aimed at developing interpretative and critical skills regarding the media themselves. The objective is to promote a deep understanding of media as cultural and social phenomena, emphasizing that they are not merely technical tools but carriers of meanings and values that shape perceptions of reality and identity formation. This entry explores the evolution of Media Education, from the 1982 UNESCO Grünwald Declaration to recent international initiatives, highlighting the role of the Media Educator as a facilitator in integrating digital technologies into educational contexts. Key aspects include the rejection of an "apocalyptic" vision of the new media (quoting Umberto Eco), the focus on media as carriers of meaning, and the promotion of critical and creative skills essential for navigating the complexities of contemporary digital culture.

Keywords: media education; media educator; educational technology; digital cultural artifacts

1. Introduction

The central theme running throughout the article is the fundamental importance of Media Education in a world pervaded by digital media. More specifically, it transcends the mere acquisition of technical skills, emphasizing the urgent need to foster critical thinking and responsible media usage. It begins by defining Media Education as a discipline focused on critically engaging with media messages, recognizing media as cultural artifacts that shape our perceptions and identities. The article traces the historical trajectory of Media Education, highlighting the evolving role of media educators in response to technological advancements. The discussion then delves into the significance of critical engagement, stressing that Media Education must teach students to analyze media messages within their social and cultural contexts, while promoting a responsible and creative use of media. The article also examines the role of technology in educational experiences, recommending the use of SWOT analysis to evaluate the risks and opportunities associated with media. It introduces the concept of the "uncanny valley" to emphasize the importance of considering user experience in interactions with technology. Subsequently, the analysis explores communication theories, referencing McLuhan's concept of the medium is the message. It further investigates the media socialization of children, underscoring the crucial role of parents and educators in fostering media literacy and responsible screen use. The distinctions and interconnections between media literacy and Media Education are then clarified. Media literacy focuses on the critical analysis of media messages, whereas Media

Education provides pedagogical strategies for integrating media awareness into the educational process. The article also addresses the issue of the "digital divide", highlighting how Media Education can empower older adults in the digital world, thereby promoting digital inclusion and fostering a more equitable society. Finally, the article presents key reference frameworks for media literacy, such as Tisseron's "3-6-9-12" model and European frameworks like DigComp, which inform educational practices. It is worth noting that paragraph 9 specifically addresses the distinction between Media Literacy and Media Education, providing clarification for those who may have doubts. For reasons of logical sequencing, this paragraph has been placed after other preliminary information on the topic of Media Education. This work aims to offer a cultural perspective on Media Education, emphasizing that it is not a novel discipline. While it is currently applied to digital media, its roots extend far back in the history of communication and communication systems. From the advent of writing, with Plato's harsh criticisms of this medium for literary or philosophical purposes—as he expressed a strong preference for live dialogue—to the emergence of radio and its associated challenges, and later to television, Media Education has always been intrinsically linked to the evolution of media technologies. In light of the points discussed in this introduction, it is important to provide a definition of Media Education. It can be defined as follows: Media Education is an educational discipline focused on critical and conscious engagement with media and their languages, regarded as complex cultural artifacts. Unlike Educational Technology, which primarily addresses the use of digital technologies to facilitate teaching and learning processes, Media Education serves as a preparatory phase aimed at developing interpretative and critical skills regarding the media themselves [1]. The objective is to promote a deep understanding of media as cultural and social phenomena, emphasizing that they are not merely technical tools but carriers of meanings and values that shape perceptions of reality and identity formation.

2. Historical Overview

The international debate on Media Education began in 1982 with the Grünwald Declaration, promoted by UNESCO, and continued with the Prague Declaration in 2003 [2,3]. Over the years, various initiatives and international documents, such as those from 2005 and 2018, have shaped this discipline and defined the professional role of the Media Educator [4–13]. This figure is seen as a multidimensional professional, combining a profound knowledge of multimedia languages with the ability to design, interpret, and manage digital technologies. However, the skills required of this professional are constantly evolving, adapting to technological changes and the emergence of new media. The Media Educator is viewed as a facilitator in teaching and learning, capable of integrating digital tools into formal, non-formal, and informal educational contexts, focusing on how these technologies can enrich rather than replace the educational process.

3. Emphasizing Critical Engagement and Social Contexts in Media Education

Media Education goes beyond technical learning about using digital devices or software, aiming to develop students' critical skills and enabling them to read and interpret media messages consciously. Interaction with media must account for the cultural, social, and political dynamics they convey. Media are not simple information carriers; they are cultural artifacts that influence the perception of the world, playing a crucial role in constructing identity at both individual and collective levels [14]. A key concept in Media Education is the rejection of technological substitution: digital technologies do not replace traditional educational practices but enrich them, offering new opportunities for intervention and new languages for interpreting reality. The process of re-mediation—digital

technologies' ability to reconfigure the world through new expressive forms—demonstrates that digital media do not eliminate what existed before but amplify its cognitive and expressive potential. Moreover, Media Education promotes the idea that it is not the media shaping students' behavior, but rather the students themselves, through media usage, who create and structure their educational experiences. This approach rejects technological determinism [1], emphasizing the importance of social practices related to media [11]. Media Education also seeks to bridge formal and informal education, recognizing the critical role of digital media in everyday life and the construction of our identity [1]. Digital technologies influence social relationships, the representation of the past, and learning "modalities". As a result, integrating media into education becomes essential to preparing students to navigate the complexities of contemporary digital culture. Another significant aspect is the hands-on, workshop approach, which emphasizes discovery-based learning. Students are not merely "recipients" of information but creators of new content, with the teacher acting as a facilitator of creative and critical experiences. Lastly, Media Education fosters transversal skills, ranging from the ability to select information to conscious interaction in digital contexts. In an era characterized by information overload and the complexity of social networks, these skills are crucial for developing a new digital literacy essential to meeting the educational challenges of the present and future. Media Education represents a crucial educational approach to prepare students to live and interact in a media-saturated society. It goes beyond providing technical skills, fostering critical and creative awareness, and shaping individuals capable of actively and responsibly participating in contemporary cultural and social contexts. However, media education addresses larger audiences, in various social contexts, not only students and not necessarily in school. To achieve this objective, it is essential to increasingly promote and adopt good practices, behaviors, and conduct aimed at fostering the education of the entire citizenry. In this endeavor, the responsibility for education should not rest solely on schools but must also involve all public and private institutions. A sense of shared and collective responsibility must be cultivated across society. However, this task is far from straightforward, as the misuse of media often facilitates the dissemination of false information, fosters indoctrination and propaganda, and exploits technology as a channel for advertising. It is important to note that media education is closely linked to the concept of media literacy, which is in turn intricately connected to the various mass media available on the market. This is clearly articulated in a statement by the European Commission dated 15 October 2024, accessible at: https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/it/policies/media-literacy (accessed on 20 December 2024). Although the title of the note, "Shaping Europe's Digital Future", might be considered questionable—since discussing "shaping" something may not be pedagogically or ethically appropriate, as it implies positioning oneself as a "creator" of something—, the content itself is well-founded. It proposes the idea of analyzing, addressing, and navigating the pedagogical and didactic complexities inherent in the need to educate about media. As the note explicitly states, "literacy is a crucial skill for all citizens, regardless of age, as it empowers them and increases their awareness". Therefore, media education, particularly in its focus on fostering digital and media literacy, can also contribute to "countering the effects of disinformation campaigns and the spread of fake news through digital media". Indeed, a media educator can design programs aimed at identifying false images, videos, and texts.

4. For a Conscious Use of Technologies

Media integrate a laboratory dimension into both the classroom and distance learning environments. This integration places learning by discovery and total mind–body-brain engagement at the forefront, which is essential for facilitating enduring learning [1]. This

is largely due to the fact that digital devices serve as a laboratory space in their own right [1]. In the near future, the focus of media education and the work of media educators will increasingly revolve around specific subjects, including the risks and opportunities presented by media. In this context, it is advisable for educators to conduct a SWOT analysis in collaboration with individuals who are knowledgeable about the media they intend to "employ". SWOT analysis serves as a decision-making tool; in this instance, the objective is to utilize media with appropriate caution and critical thinking, thereby identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This field encompasses the study and preparation of teachers, students, and educators. A pertinent example is the concept of the uncanny valley [14], which holds significant relevance in the realm of human–computer interaction within virtual learning environments [15,16], as well as in the domains of edutainment and entertainment. The uncanny valley refers to the phenomenon where humanoid robots or digital avatars evoke feelings of unease or discomfort in users when their appearance is nearly, but not quite, human-like. This concept is particularly critical in educational settings that utilize virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR), where the emotional responses of learners can significantly impact their engagement and learning outcomes. For instance, if a virtual character in an educational simulation is too realistic but lacks certain human traits, students may experience a sense of eeriness, potentially hindering their interaction with the educational content. Understanding this psychological reaction allows educators to make informed decisions about the design and implementation of media, ensuring that the technological tools they use enhance rather than detract from the learning experience. Therefore, by integrating the insights from the uncanny valley into the SWOT analysis, educators can better navigate the complexities of digital media, ultimately fostering more effective and engaging learning environments. In the context of media education, it is essential for a media educator to adopt a critical and reflective approach rather than succumbing to the dichotomous categories of "apocalyptic" or "integrated", as suggested by Umberto Eco [17]. The apocalyptic stance tends to overly emphasize the risks and threats associated with media, often leading to a pessimistic view of their impact on society and individuals. Conversely, the integrated position may result in an excessive optimism regarding the positive potentials of media, underestimating the risks and challenges that may arise (this is the vision of the "integrated"). For a media educator, developing the capacity to discern and critically analyze the various situations in which media are involved is crucial. Each context is unique and requires careful consideration of the cultural, social, and emotional dynamics at play. This critical approach enables the identification and evaluation of both the potential benefits and risks of media [18–20], while also adapting educational strategies to the specific needs and characteristics of the target audience.

5. Fostering Critical Thinking and Responsible Technology Integration in Media Education

Furthermore, critical thinking facilitates an understanding of the complexities inherent in media phenomena, allowing the media educator to develop educational content that fosters deep and informed thinking. In this way, it promotes a more responsible and informed use of media, contributing to the formation of critical and active citizens in a mediated society. Therefore, the ability to analyze and reflect upon media situations is a key element in the work of a media educator, enabling them to navigate contemporary challenges with competence and awareness [21,22]. In summary, the hands-on educational experience [23] offered by a Media Educator not only makes learning more engaging, but also more relevant, helping students to develop critical and adaptive skills that are fundamentals to successfully navigating and coping in a complex and ever-changing

world [24]. As proven, the human teaching-learning process can derive significant benefits from the numerous technologies available nowadays [1,16]. Despite the emergence of neologisms and acronyms that may confuse novices in the field of computing, it is essential to recognize the profound influence that technologies can exert on individuals. Educational institutions must confront this challenge by promoting a balanced and conscious use of technology [21,22]. At the regulatory level, the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning, and the subsequent Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning, offer a critical yet constructive lens through which to understand technology, aiming to ensure that future European citizens use these tools with due "care". These recommendations state that for high-quality education, it is imperative to investigate innovative pedagogical methods to address the demands of an increasingly mobile and digital society. Digital technologies significantly influence education, training, and learning by fostering more flexible learning environments tailored to the requirements of a highly mobile populace. In accordance with Rivoltella's reasoning articulated in his ten theses on media education [1], it can be posited that our lives are profoundly influenced by digital technologies, which mediate our understanding, our representation and comprehension of the past, as well as our interpersonal relationships. This condition presents significant risks but also substantial opportunities, necessitating our careful deliberation in finding a balance. However, to abandon technology in contemporary education would equate to neglecting the essential mission of schools, which is to assist individuals in interpreting and engaging with culture [1].

6. A Brief Exploration of Communication Theory

In an era where digital technologies permeate every aspect of our lives, media education becomes essential in equipping learners with the skills to navigate, analyze, and engage with these varied media landscapes. By fostering critical media literacy, educators can empower students to become discerning consumers and active creators of media, enabling them to understand the broader implications of their media choices on personal identity and societal dynamics [25,26]. It may be useful, in order to shed some light on the subject, to reason about the studies of Marshall McLuhan. It is noteworthy that this Canadian philosopher has inextricably linked the analysis of human communication to the study of the technologies employed in that communication [25]. It is important to acknowledge that McLuhan did not adopt an academic style; instead, he favored provocative slogans and statements, which complicates the formulation of an accurate synthesis of his ideas. The most popular of which is "the medium is the message". To achieve a deeper understanding of McLuhan, it is beneficial to consider several key assertions. Firstly, McLuhan undertook the complex task of aggregating disparate elements into a single category, such as books, jeans, telephones, paintings, and highways, drawn from heterogeneous contexts like language, clothing, electrical communications, art, and transportation [25]; all of these objects are seen as media. This amalgamation, which may be interpreted as a provocative act, prompts reflection on his intention to situate these diverse elements within a unified conceptual framework (in which the concept of media is very broad). Each of these entities possesses profoundly divergent origins and belongs to highly specialized fields of research, thus evading excessive simplification. While these communication media may share a common core, they also exhibit substantial differences that cannot be assimilated into a larger category. Furthermore, the previously cited statement, "the medium is the message" [14], can be distilled into the argument that the content transmitted holds marginal significance. For instance, when contemplating the act of giving a rose or something symbolizing this concept, contemporary media—both traditional and new—offer a plethora of options. An

example might be as follows: one could send a real rose, draw a rose as a present, or transmit an icon via WhatsApp, among other possibilities; however, will it be more pleasing to receive a real rose, with its perfume, or its icon [27]? Furthermore, McLuhan contended that the medium should not be viewed in an engineering sense; rather, it represents a complex human cognitive system, which can also include metacognition [27]. Through the medium, interaction becomes possible, as exemplified by the system of human-pen-paper, which, in the context of digital technologies, manifests through human–machine interfaces. For greater precision, communication media can be categorized into unidirectional forms, such as television; bidirectional forms like letter exchanges; and, from another perspective, asynchronous forms, as seen in written correspondence, or synchronous forms, such as a telephone conversation via Skype [27]. In McLuhan's view, the medium delineates the framework within which a message can be defined during its transmission and reception. In terms of media education, the educator must teach the educator that every system (synchronous-asynchronous or one-way-bidirectional) has strengths, weaknesses, risks, and opportunities, i.e., the SWOT analysis mentioned above. Returning to the effective example of the rose, a WhatsApp icon cannot convey, alongside its visual element, the fragrance of a flower. Consequently, when a sender opts to use this technology as a transmission medium, they also make a "selection" regarding which senses will be engaged in the sending and receiving processes, leaving other sensory aspects unexpressed [27].

7. Media Socialization and the Role of Parents and Educators in Managing Screen Exposure During Childhood

Another challenge concerns childhood. The socialization of children through media is a complex phenomenon that presents both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, television and digital content provide tools for learning and social interaction, contributing to the development of communicative and cultural competencies. On the other hand, exposure to violent or inappropriate content can raise concerns among parents regarding their children's behavior and emotional well-being [27,28]. It is crucial to recognize that children are not mere passive recipients of information; they actively engage with media, reinterpreting experiences and integrating them into their daily lives. In this context, parents play a critical role: they must not only monitor the content to which their children are exposed but also educate them to develop critical media literacy. This approach not only fosters mindful technology usage but also helps in constructing a robust personal and social identity in young individuals [27,28]. In an ever-evolving world, it is, therefore, essential to promote open dialogue between parents and children concerning media, transforming potential pitfalls into opportunities for growth and shared learning [29]. The advent of new technologies can be regarded, in many respects, as one of the most significant themes in contemporary pedagogy. A pressing question arises: at what developmental stage and through which approaches should devices utilizing digital screens be introduced within the context of early childhood experiences? Similar to the established guidelines for incorporating various types of food into a child's diet, Tisseron [27] suggests the possibility of conceptualizing a "dietary approach" to screens, aimed at teaching appropriate usage while resisting the dual temptations faced by parents and educators, idealizing or "demonizing" these technologies. We return once again to Umberto Eco's vision, apocalyptic versus integrated [18]. Educators must actively engage with, read about, and comprehend how to navigate the introduction of screens by observing and understanding the needs and fears that exposure to digital screens can provoke. This process involves applying principles such as self-regulation, alternation, and accompaniment. Tisseron outlines four critical stages for the introduction of screens, beginning at age three with entry into preschool, followed by age six with the commencement of primary school, age nine marking the "introduction"

to reading and writing, and finally, ages eleven to twelve, which signal the transition to secondary school [27,28]. In consideration of this "diet" [27], proposed by Tisseron and the literature that is extensively present in his text and which, for brevity's sake, cannot be reproduced in full here, it is essential for educators to work towards preventing children from experiencing overexposure and overstimulation. Digital screens convey sounds and colors with intensities that far exceed those of sensory stimuli encountered in everyday life. Tisseron indicates that parents and educators can effectively regulate screen usage through a mindful approach that embodies the principles of self-regulation, promoting limited use of digital technologies, alternation, which encourages a balance between screen time and other media or activities, and accompaniment, ensuring that children are not left alone in front of screens. These principles, while appearing to be straightforward articulations of practices emerging from "common sense" empower parents and educators to cultivate awareness and autonomy in children regarding the appropriate use of various human–machine interface technologies centered on digital screens. By applying these principles, screen users can potentially stimulate both hypothetical-deductive reasoning and intuitive intelligence [27,28].

8. Interconnections and Distinctions Between Media Literacy and Media Education

It is important to highlight several aspects that convey an interconnected, networked, and systemic perspective of media education, particularly in relation to the closely associated field of media literacy. Media literacy and media education represent interconnected yet distinct domains within the broader study of media engagement. Media literacy emphasizes the development of critical skills necessary to analyze, interpret, and evaluate media messages, while media education focuses on pedagogical strategies and methodologies for incorporating media awareness and competencies into educational settings. Kellner's Media Culture [29] and Potter's Media Literacy [30] provide foundational perspectives on the critical examination of media's cultural and ideological influence. Yousman [31] engages with the ethical dimensions of media literacy, questioning whether its primary aim should be fostering critical citizenship or enhancing consumer awareness. Similarly, Pérez Tornero and Varis [32] underscore the role of media education in cultivating global citizenship and critical thinking skills in an increasingly interconnected media environment. Silverblatt et al. [33] contribute practical approaches for educators to integrate media education into curriculum design and pedagogical practices. Together, these works offer comprehensive theoretical and practical frameworks that advance the fields of media literacy and media education, equipping individuals and educators to navigate and critically engage with the complexities of contemporary media landscapes.

9. Bridging the Digital Divide: Empowering Older Adults Through Lifelong Media Education

Population aging is a global phenomenon, with the growing older adult demographic posing significant challenges to mental and physical health, making it a worldwide priority. In this context, social media has emerged as a key resource to support older individuals [34]. This is where media education can and should help and be supportive. A study conducted within the framework of the Aging in a Networked Society project [35] involving a sample of 32,000 elderly found that the most commonly used application among those aged 65 and older is WhatsApp, with approximately 52% of seniors using it on a daily basis. This scenario suggests that while technology use is present, it is primarily focused on communication tools like WhatsApp, which are relatively simple to use for staying in touch with family and friends. It, therefore, emerges as a positive aspect that new technologies

decrease isolation (in fact, grandparents can see their grandchildren via video call and can hear distant friends). However, this usage does not necessarily reflect advanced digital literacy. Many older adults face difficulties with more complex functions, such as managing attachments (PDFs, Word documents, etc.), protecting themselves from spam, and accessing multimedia resources like videos. Moreover, in more digitally advanced countries, the ability to use digital identity systems and access online government services has become an essential skill. This introduces a further challenge: many seniors find themselves relying on children or grandchildren to navigate these complex digital citizenship systems, making them vulnerable and often dependent on the assistance of younger generations [36,37]. This situation underscores the need for continuous digital education that extends beyond the classroom and spans all stages of life. It is crucial that digital literacy programs are designed to address the specific needs of the elderly, empowering them to navigate the digital world autonomously and securely. In particular, practical courses should be offered that not only teach the use of common applications but also provide the necessary skills to defend against online threats such as phishing, spam, and fraud, as well as educate seniors about the importance of privacy and security in digital transactions. Promoting the digital inclusion of older adults not only improves their quality of life but also fosters a more equitable society, where all generations can actively participate in the digital realm without feeling excluded or dependent on others [38,39].

10. A Brief Presentation of Current Media Literacy Frameworks

At the level of media education, when one thinks of literacy at an early age, one can think, as Tisseron suggests, of a diathesis of digital screens. Tisseron asks questions that all educators, therefore all educational agencies (school, family, etc.), should ask themselves [27]. At what age and in what ways should screens—including television, video games, and computers—be introduced into children's lives? The 3-6-9-12 formula outlines four key milestones: 3 years old, the entry into preschool; 6 years old, the start of primary school; 9 years old, the acquisition of reading and writing skills; and 11–12 years old, the transition to secondary school. Just as there are guidelines for introducing dairy, vegetables, and meat into a child's diet, a "dietary" approach to screen use can be imagined, helping children learn to use these technologies appropriately. This approach requires resisting two temptations: idealizing these technologies or demonizing them. This text is intended for parents and educators, providing insights and a deeper understanding of an increasingly relevant educational issue. Tisseron's model is well-suited to prevent phenomena such as cybercrime and disinformation because its stages, starting from a young age, raise awareness about three key issues related to the internet: (1) the permanence of everything that is written or posted online, (2) the importance of skepticism regarding the veracity of information found online, and (3) the unknown identity of those on the other side of the screen, in addition to the risks associated with sexting. For adolescents and adults, however, other documents may be consulted. The following discussion refers to European frameworks, although analogous documents are available in other regions globally. European frameworks, such as the e-Competence Framework for ICT Users (e-CF) [40] and DigComp [41], are closely linked to media education as they both aim to develop the digital skills needed for effective, critical, and responsible media engagement. While the e-CF focuses on professional ICT competencies, including content creation and cybersecurity, the DigComp Framework emphasizes core digital skills like information literacy and communication, which are central to media education. Together, these frameworks support the development of the competencies necessary for individuals to navigate, critically assess, and responsibly use digital media, aligning with the goals of media education. In the proposed models, e-Competence Framework for ICT Users (e-CF) [40] and DigComp [41],

it is explicitly addressed through specific modules aimed at mitigating phenomena, such as cybercrime and disinformation. Since they are part of the subjects to be studied and require an exam to be passed in order to demonstrate the acquired skills, they are fully aligned with the concept of Life Long Learning.

11. Conclusions

Fortunately, the logic of cultural consumption does not correspond to *aut aut*, but to *et et* [1]. i.e., the new one does not delete the previous one but flanks it, and technologies are not substitutive, but integrative. Therefore, rather than being a factor of discontinuity, new digital media should be regarded as a re-mediation of reality, i.e., a reconfiguration of elements of everyday reality in a different key [1]. The digital does not replace anything, but enriches our possibilities of intervention in reality [1]. If we view everything from this positive yet critically thinking perspective, media also serve as a curriculum for students that is shaped by a media educator if we think of a school context. In fact, media are not only tools to be used in the classroom, but also a necessary basic competence: to search and select information, to collaborate and cooperate, to manage relationships, to manage time, and to manage the relationship with content [1]. Current digital technologies have exerted a significant influence on daily life. This impact extends notably to the context of educators, encompassing both informal and non-formal learning environments, as well as institutional teaching settings. Generally, some teachers believe that adopting this new interactive mode, characterized by the integration of modern technologies, can substantially enhance and optimize their daily work and related planning efforts [29]. However, a limited number of teachers express difficulties in utilizing these technologies, often requiring assistance from colleagues to perform basic operations, such as entering grades during evaluation sessions or simply taking attendance in an electronic logbook. To better understand this situation, it is essential to consider the complex relationship between teaching staff and the various information systems in use. Thus, it is inappropriate to generalize the belief that these systems universally improve and expedite activities. It is also important to acknowledge the perspectives of those who find these technologies "inconvenient", "slow", or "too complicated", asserting that they burden bureaucratic and educational procedures without offering any real improvements to professional life. While it is undeniable that, in specific contexts, the adoption of digital devices has transformed technology into a sort of techno-baroque appendage [38], the previous paragraphs aim to emphasize the positive aspects of media. It is crucial that educators, particularly teachers, avoid perpetuating a dichotomy between "us" and "them" in the context of digital learning [1]. This implies recognizing that while young people may not yet possess fully developed digital skills, they often exhibit a strong sense of technological confidence [1]. This confidence must be cultivated and transformed into technological awareness. Similarly, educators themselves must work to enhance their own technological confidence, fostering a deeper awareness that will enable them to effectively guide and support students in navigating the digital landscape. It is beneficial for every educator to adopt a mindset of being "perpetually young", in the sense that they should feel personally responsible for improving their media education skills, rather than relying on a dichotomy that positions students as the sole users of new media. The notion that students, due to their youth, should be the only ones engaging with new technologies while teachers refrain from doing so is counterproductive. Instead, educators must actively participate in the evolving media landscape alongside their students. In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that research on Media Education is advancing rapidly. Recent trends and new frontiers in the field include the use of generative AI to enhance creativity and critical thinking [42–44], the adoption of augmented reality for immersive educational experiences [45], mobile applications to improve accessibility and

personalized learning [46], and the integration of media education into programs aimed at promoting elderly well-being [47].

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