

# The Access of Young People in the Usage of the Internet and Social Networks in Life and in Learning

**VALENTINA MUCUNSKA PALEVSKA PhD**

University of Tourism and Management Skopje

**KONSTANTIN PETKOVSKI. PhD**

Faculty for Technical Science- University St Kliment Oridski Bitola

**ALEKSANDAR BLAZESKI, MSc**

Student of Doctoral Studies - University St Kliment Oridski Bitola

Email: [ablazeski@yahoo.com](mailto:ablazeski@yahoo.com)

## *Abstract*

*Modern digital processes change the paradigm in terms of creating cognitive, emotional and communication code among young people. Digital media in the 21st century has become obsessive communication tool and medium of young population. In an age of global information and communication the strategy of societies based on knowledge that permanently generate millions of information in order to improve competitiveness is promoted. In this context, in the R. Macedonia last decade is promoting the need to provide resources and infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted availability of the Internet and other digital media to online servicing the needs of citizens and business community. In this regard the National Strategy for Information Society Development is created in which an integral part also is e-education. That shifted the paradigm in terms of actualization of the need to integrate information technology at all levels of education in the process of acquiring new knowledge aimed at building a society based on knowledge and competitive business environment. The current situation regarding the new approach to using information technology in the teaching process of acquisition of knowledge is not satisfactory. Despite the implemented projects to train teachers to use ICT in teaching resistance to innovation is an indisputable fact that enables application of learning based on the development of projects, research, generating creative solutions that will contribute to the active involvement of the youth in the process of learning in which they should be active entity and by using information technology in the learning process will acquire the communications, information and social competencies necessary for active and competitive involvement in the business community. Taking into account the current situation in this scientific work subject is the application of ICT in the process of formation and learning of young people. Phenomenon under study is the current situation of young people in relation to the application of ICT. A problem which is investigating is the improper use of ICT by young people.*

**Key Words:** Social Life, Young People, Learning, Internet.

## **Introduction**

Sophisticated educational systems in developed economies in the world affirm the need of building a global Communication-information environment that will allow users of educational services and the business community access to information, information sharing and exchange of fundamental practices for improving processes function of intellectual competitive bid. It is why establishing a system of functional information and communication infrastructure based on the promotion of ICT content in education,

development of management information system for education, development of systems of distance learning, lifelong and flexible learning is required. For that purpose ICT -literacy and content development is a need for adjustment of civic education in terms of empowering citizens to use e-services, providing continuous digital literacy by adapting to specific professional needs, publishing literature ICT and multimedia in a standard format, creation and use of information in digital form, creating virtual working environments. For the purposes of e-learning in the Republic Macedonia a Proteus portal is designed which is sublimation of all activities taking place in the field of education. A MARNET research network is also created for the continuous development of the university and the academic community which should provide access to Internet information globally through networking of all stakeholders on the application of digital technology. The foregoing activities indicate the focus of the Macedonian educational and business context of approximation to EU standards through the implementation of ICT standards and best practices regarding the application of digital technology in the Macedonian context.

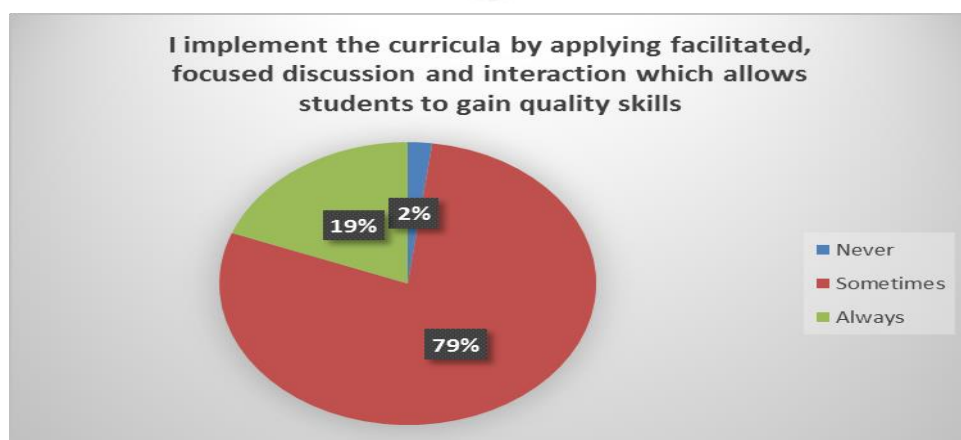
## **Research Methodology**

Secular trends in the application of ICT in the process of communicating, learning and teaching changed the paradigm in education in terms of preference of strategies of self-direction, self-learning, research, project learning, facilitate learning and more. In this context, is as well focused the research in this paper through which the current situation in the educational system in the Republic Macedonia at the level of secondary education is quantitative and qualitative analyzed. The goal is to get exact information about the application of ICT in teaching aimed at the acquisition of high quality, effective and competitive knowledge. Despite numerous reforms implemented for a decade yet ICT literacy and infrastructure in the Republic Macedonia is unsatisfactory. It is an indicator of the resistance to change as a result of stereotyped mental code that is not adaptable to changing global environment. In order to examine the attitudes of teachers and students about the use of ICT in teaching two combined questionnaires have been set, one for the students which contains 14 statements about the use of ICT.. Each statement has 4 alternative answers for the use of ICT: for fun, to relax, to gain knowledge from certain areas which are a subject to your personal interest for information and knowledge related to teaching. About the attitudes of teachers there is an instrument which contains 12 statements on a scale of views: never, sometimes, always. For obtaining relevant indicators a protocol for conducting interviews with students and protocol for conducting the interview with teachers, as well as protocol for conducting facilitated discussion with students and protocol for conducting facilitated discussions with teachers has been created. Student questionnaire is designed according to three indicators: the use of ICT for personal interest, for fun, for learning. The teacher questionnaire is designed according to four indicators: use of ICT in teaching, improving competence and skills of students, creating effective communication at institutional level by applying ICT, application of software for learning and teaching. The survey was conducted in September 2016 in 20 secondary schools in Skopje on a sample of 960 students, 48 students from each high school, from which 12 students of first, second, third and fourth year. From each year 3 students with a GPA of 2.5; 3 students with a GPA of 3.5, 3 students with a GPA of 4.5; 3 students with a GPA of 5.00. The survey included 240 teachers from 20 secondary schools in Skopje, of which 12 teachers from each school, 1 teacher from each professional asset. Study data were subject to quantitative and qualitative analysis. The survey was conducted with a degree of skepticism about the anonymity and confidentiality of data indicating the mistrust and fear that teachers have in this segment, fearing that objectivity in completing the questionnaire could have negative consequences for them as a result of the reactions of the managers of secondary schools. The same attitude had students who were afraid that teachers can criticize and even their lower grades. For these reasons, at first interviews with five teachers from each high school in 20 schools were conducted, which means that the interview was conducted with a total of 100 teachers and 4 students from each school of which 1 excellent student of the first year, a Second year, third year and fourth year, which means that a total of 80 students were interviewed from 20 secondary schools in Skopje. For the survey a structured interview of four questions for teachers and structured interview four questions for students pertaining to the application of ICT in teaching was created. In addition the most indicative answers from the interview of teachers and students were listed. The question: Do you have needs competences to use ICT in teaching? Yes answered

25 teachers at the age of 25 to 35, In part answered 32 teachers aged 35 to 40 years. With No answered 43 teachers aged 45 to 58 years. This suggests incompetence of teachers in terms of ICT literacy, resulting in failure to apply ICT in the realization process of teaching. Their explanation is that the Ministry of Education has organized training for ICT literacy and use of appropriate software in teaching, but that the trainings were substandard and few in number and that caused them not be able to use ICT in classes or self-education by monitoring scientific information over the internet. It produces no possibility for students to be taught about the possibilities of ICT in order to improve their competences. The teachers highlight that the Ministry of Education and Science computerised the secondary schools in a short period of time, but lack of adequate culture of behavior and understanding of the benefits from their use results in the destruction of computers that are now not operational. Since respondents were of different ages, teachers who are aged 25 to 35 have a positive attitude towards the changes in the design of teaching in which the student is an active entity that establishes interaction with others in the classroom where the teacher is in the role of a facilitator. Teachers who are aged 35 to 40 years sometimes use ICT in teaching, but encountered resistance from students to use the same function of research, teaching or finding creative solutions. Their opinion is that ICT students use during classes for fun and relaxation. Teachers who are aged 45 to 58 years consider the application of ICT in teaching is a process that does not affect the improvement of learning outcomes. In the context of the application of ICT in teaching and also with students structured an interview of 4 questions about their skills in the use of ICT in the learning process was conducted. The interview was conducted with 80 students who are of the opinion that ICT is a global need and allows access to all the information they need to learn. They also pointed out that ICT is a medium that contributes to the development of cognitive, social and creative skills. But according to them the problem of resistance to the use of ICT in teaching is the lack of information and motivation by teachers. Their attitude is that teachers still teach under traditional ex cathedra approach in which the student is in a position of passive consumer of information. According to the views of students interviewed some teachers attempted to update teaching using ICT, but it takes a short period of time after which return to traditional forms of teaching.

The quantitative analysis of the survey results on attitudes of teachers on the application of ICT in teaching has given the following indicative results:

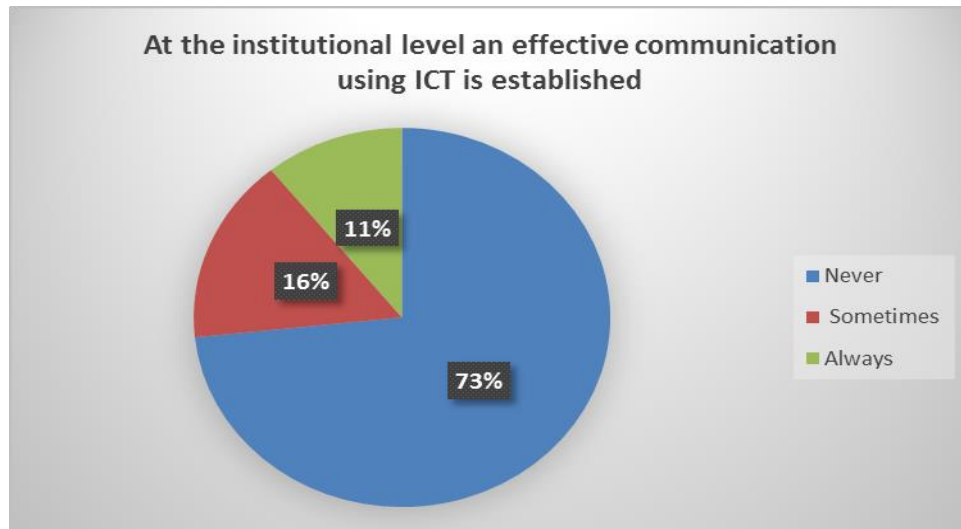
The proposition no. 1: I implement the curricula by applying facilitated, focused discussion and interaction which allows students to gain quality skills.



Of the 240 surveyed teachers, 2% said that they never implement the curricula by applying facilitated focused discussion and interaction which allows students to gain quality competence, but that lectures are ex cathedra, 79% said that sometimes the teaching contents are implemented by applying facilitated focused discussion and interaction which allows students to gain quality skills, 19% said they always

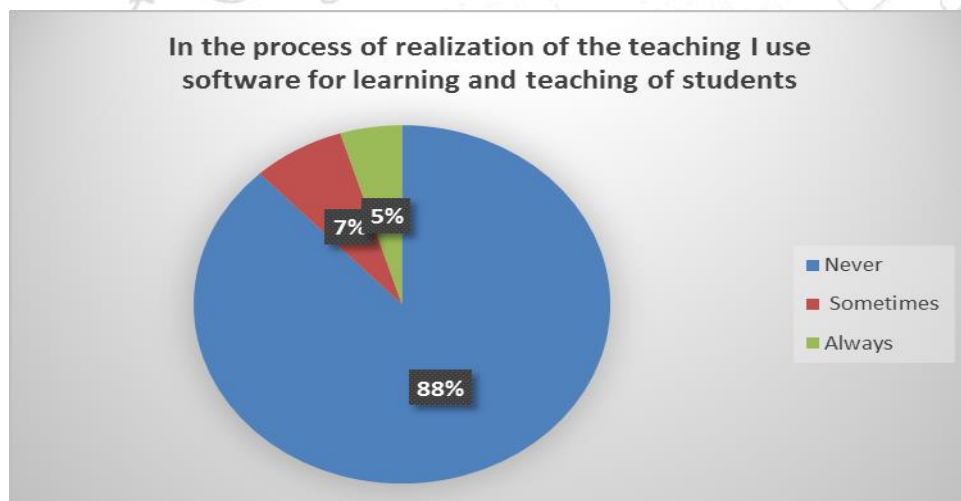
implement the curricula by applying facilitated focused discussion and interaction which allows students to gain quality skills.

The proposition no. 5: At institutional level an effective communication using ICT is established.



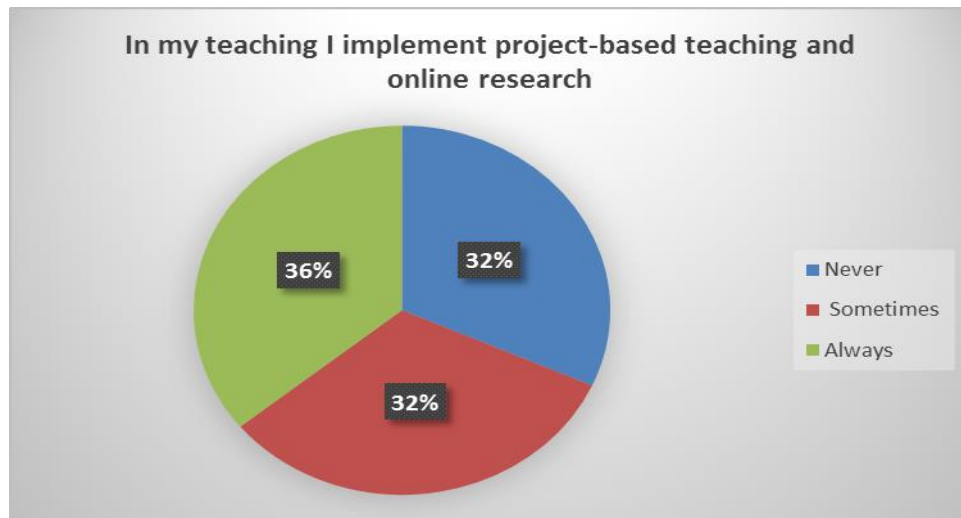
Of the 240 surveyed teachers, 73% said that their organization has not established possibly effective communication and does not apply ICT in the communication process, 16% said they sometimes used possibly effective communication in the process of communication using ICT, 11% said that they always apply effective communication and ICT as a medium of communication.

The proposition no. 11: In the process of realization of the teaching I use software for learning and teaching of students



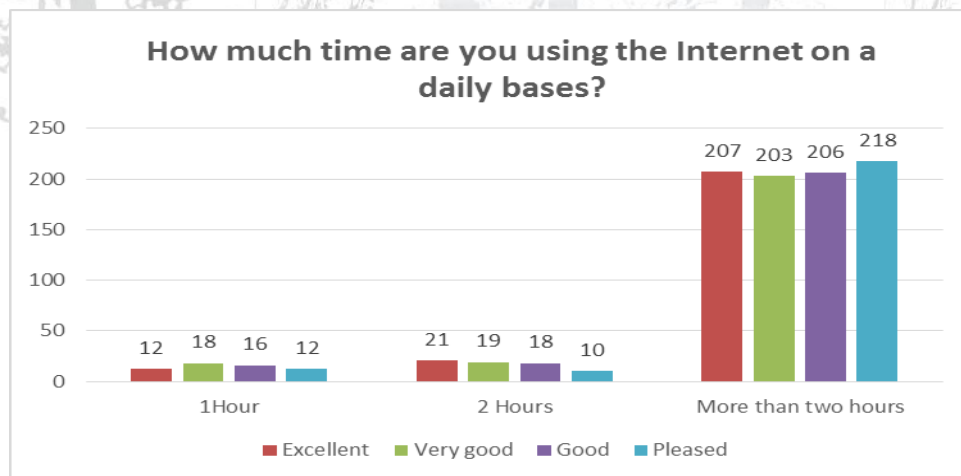
Of the 240 surveyed teachers, 88% answered that in their teaching they have never used softwares for learning and teaching, 7% said sometimes in the process of realization of teaching don't use softwares for learning and teaching, 5% said they never implement softwares in the process of learning and teaching.

The proposition no. 12: In my teaching I implement project-based teaching and online research.



Of the 240 surveyed teachers, 32% said they never realize project-based teaching and research using the Internet, 32% said that they sometimes implement project-based teaching and research using the Internet, 36% said that they always realize project-based teaching and research using the internet. The quantitative analysis of the results of the survey of students' attitudes regarding the use of ICT in the learning process gave the following results:

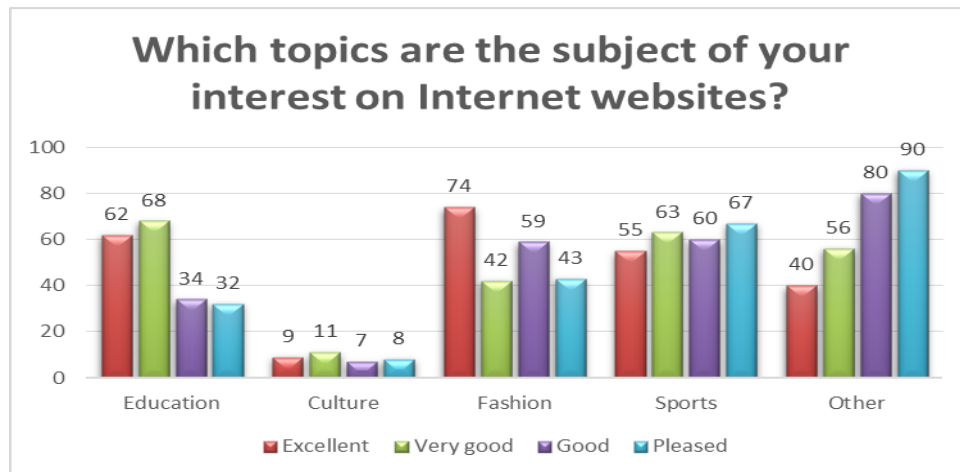
The Question. 1: How much time are you using the Internet on a daily bases?



Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with a GPA of 5.00, 12 (5%) of the respondents said that they daily use the internet for one hour, 21 (9%) answered two hours, 207 (86%) said more than two hours. From the 240 respondents with a GPA of 4.00, 18 (7%) respondents said they spend one hour a day online, 19 (8%) answered two hours, 203 (85%) said more than two hours. Out of the 240 respondents with good success, 16 (7%) said that they use the Internet for one hour a day, 18 (7%) responded two hours, 206 (86%) said more than two hours. Out of the 240 subjects with sufficient success, 12 (5%) respondents said that they use the Internet one hour a day, 10 (4%) answered two hours, 218 (91%) said more.

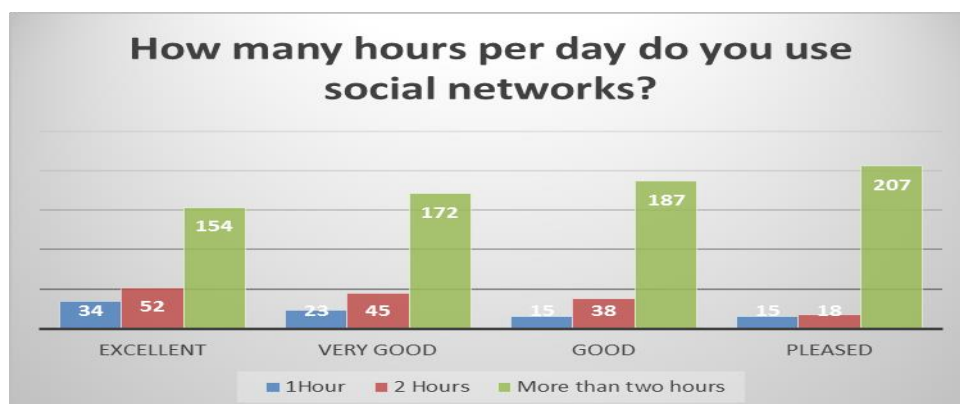
The Question. 2: Which topics are the subject of your interest on Internet websites?





Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with a GPA of 5.00, 62 (16%) of respondents said that the object of interest on the websites are education topics, 9 (4%) said that the subject of interest include cultural topics, 74 (31%) said that the subject of interest are fashion trends, 55 (23%) said that the subject of interest are sports, 40 (16%) that the subject of interest to other topics. Out of the 240 respondents with a Very Good GPA, 68 (28%) respondents said that the subject of interest of websites are topics of Education, 11 (5%) said that the subject of interest include cultural topics, 42 (18%) said that the subject of interest are fashion trends, 63 (26%) said that the subject of interest are sports, 56 (23%) that the subject of interest are other topics. From the 240 subjects with a Good GPA, 34 (14%) respondents said that the object of interest on the websites are education topics, 7 (3%) said that the subject of interest include cultural topics, 59 (25%) responded that the object of interest are fashion trends, 60 (25%) said that the subject of interest are sports, 80 (33%) that the subject of interest are other topics. Out of the 240 subjects with a sufficient GPA, 32 (13%) respondents said that the object of interest on the websites are education topics, 8 (3%) said that the subject of interest include cultural topics, 43 (18%) responded that the object of interest are fashion trends, 67 (28%) said that the subject of interest are sports, 90 (38%) that the subject of interest are other topics.

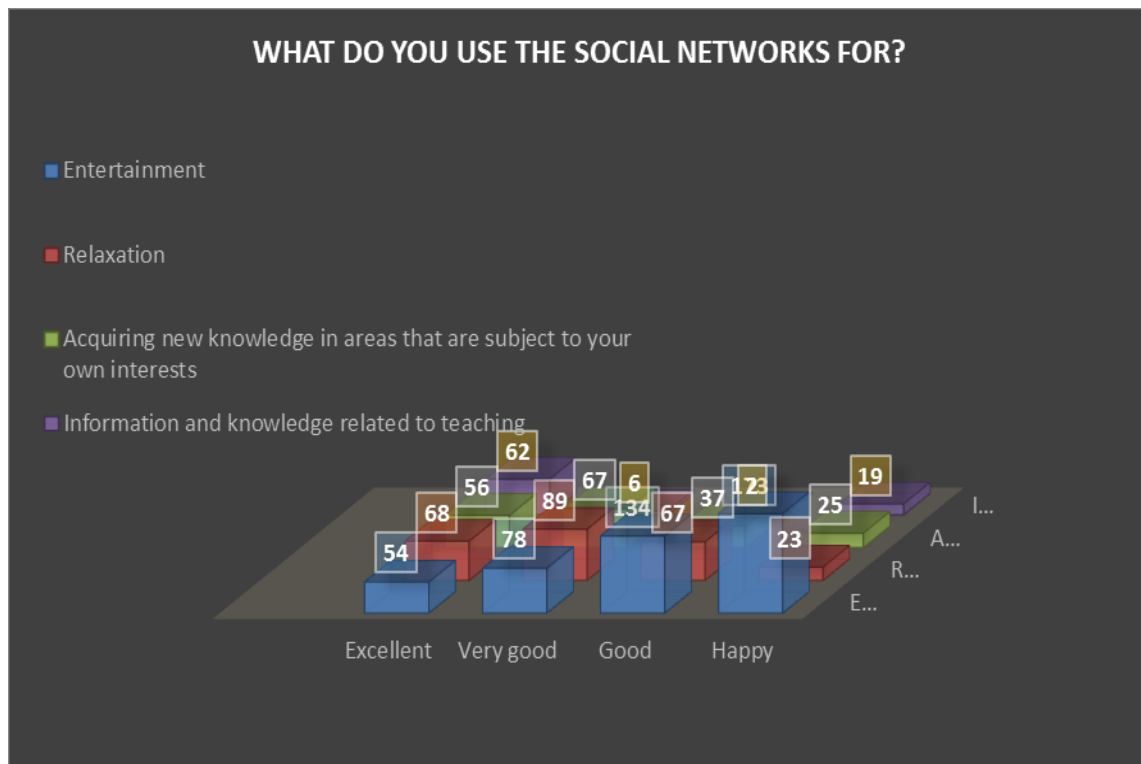
The Question. 3: How many hours per day do you use social networks?



Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with an excellent GPA, 34 (14%) of respondents said that they use the social media 1 hour per day, 52 (22%) say that use the social networks 2 hours per day, 154 (64%) responded that social networks are used more than 2 hours a day. Out of the 240 respondents with a Very Good GPA, 23 (9%) of respondents said that they use the social media 1 hour per day, 45 (19%) said 2

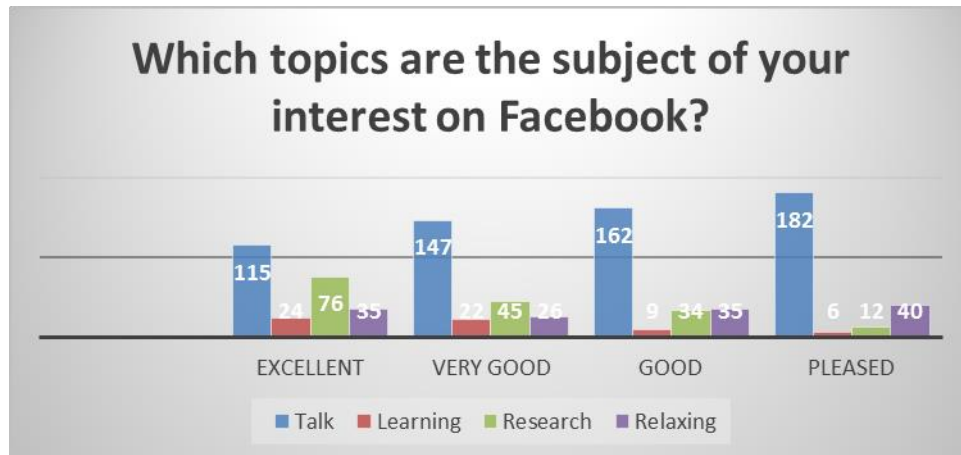
hours per day, 172 (72%) said more than 2 hours per day. From 240 respondents with a good GPA, 15 (6%) of respondents said that they use the social media 1 hour per day, 38 (16%) said 2 hours per day, 187 (78%) said more than 2 hours a day. From 240 subjects with a sufficient GPA, 15 (6%) of respondents said that they use the social media 1 hour per day, 18 (8%) said 2 hours per day, 207 (86%) said more than 2 hours a day.

The Question. 4: What do you use the social networks for?

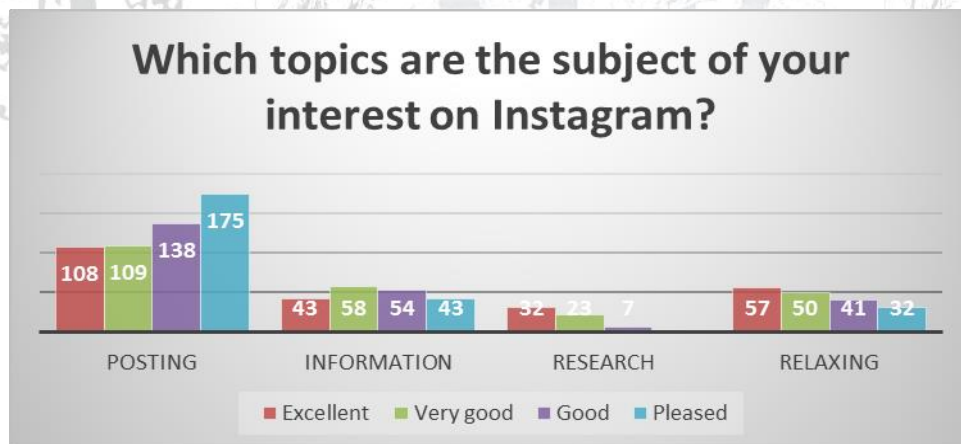


Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with excellent GPA, 54 (22%) of respondents said that social networks are used for entertainment, 68 (28%) said that social networks are used for relaxation, 56 (23%) said that social networks are used for acquiring new zanenja subject to their own interests, 62 (26%) said that social networks are used for information and knowledge related to teaching. The 240 respondents very good GPA, 78 (32%) of respondents said that social networks are used for entertainment, 89 (37%) said that social networks are used for relaxation, 67 (28%) said that social networks are used for acquiring knowledge as a subject to their personal interest, 6 (2.5%) said that social networks are used for information and knowledge related to teaching.

The 240 subjects with good GPA, 134 (56%) respondents said that social networks are used for entertainment, 67 (28%) said that social networks are used for relaxation, 37 (15%) said that social networks are used for acquiring knowledge as a subject to their own interests, 2 (0.8%) said that social networks are used for information and knowledge related to teaching. The 240 subjects with sufficient success, 173 (72%) of respondents said that social networks are used for entertainment, 23 (9%) said that social networks are used for relaxation, 25 (10%) said that social networks are used for the acquisition of knowledge that is a subject to their own interests, 19 (7.9%) said that social networks are used for information and knowledge related to teaching.

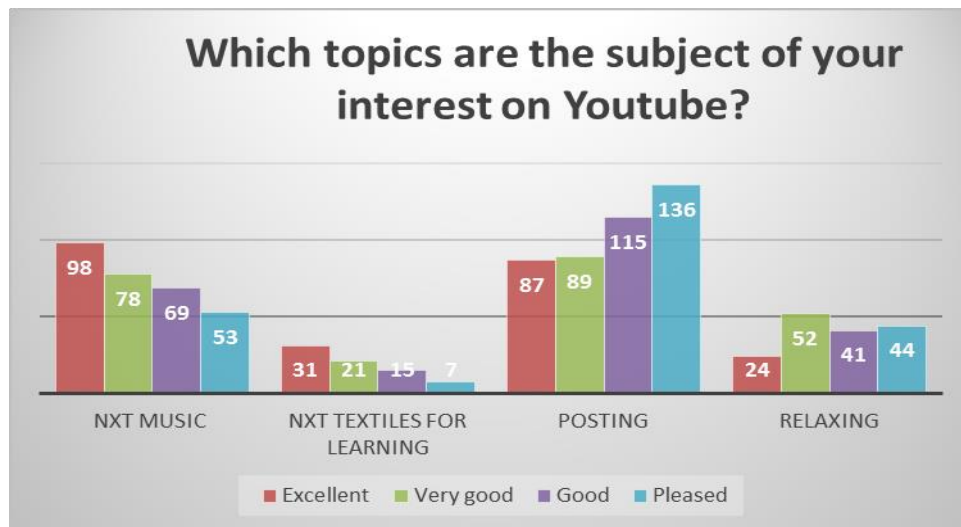


Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with an excellent GPA, 115 (46%) of respondents said that they use Facebook for interpersonal communication 24 (10%) said that they use it for Learning, 76 (30%) responded that they use it for research, 35 (14%) responded that they use it for relaxing. The 240 respondents with a very good GPA, 147 (61%) of respondents said that they use Facebook for interpersonal communication, 22 (9%) responded that they use it for learning 45(19%) said that they use it for Research, 26 (11%) responded that it is used for relaxation. The 240 respondents with a good GPA, 162 (29%) of respondents said they use it for interpersonal communication, 9 (2%) responded that they use it for Learning, 34 (63%) responded for Research, 35 (6%) said that they use it for relaxing. The 240 subjects with sufficient success, 182 (76%) of respondents said they use it for interpersonal communication, 6 (2%) responded that they use Facebook for Learning, 12 (5%) responded for Research, 40 (17%) said that use it for relaxing.

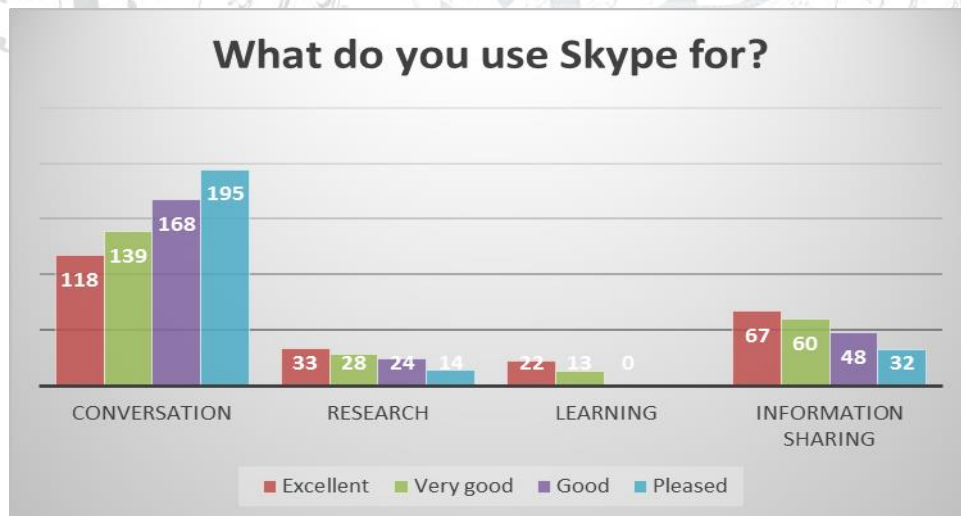


Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with excellent success, 108 (45%) of respondents said that they use Instagram to post pictures, 43 (17%) responded that they use Instagram for public information, 32 (13%) responded for research, 57 (23%) responded for relaxing. The 240 respondents with a very Good GPA, 109 (45%) of respondents said that they use Instagram to post pictures, 58 (24%) said that they use it for public information, 23 (9%) said for research, 50 (21%) responded said for relaxing. The 240 respondents with good success, 138 (57%) of respondents said that they use Instagram for posting pictures, 54 (22%) responded for public information, 7 (2%) responded for research, 41 (17%) responded for relaxing. The 240 subjects with sufficient success, 175 (72%) of respondents said that that they use Instagram for posting pictures, 43 (18%) responded that they use it for public information, 0 (13%) responded for research, 32 (%) responded for relaxing.





Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with excellent GPA, 98 (41%) of respondents said that they use YouTube for downloading music, 31 (13%) said that they use YouTube to download study materials, 87 (36%) said that they use it for posting, 24 (10%) said they use YouTube for relaxing. The 240 respondents with very Good GPA, 78 (32%) of respondents said that they use YouTube to download Music, 21 (8%) said that they use it to download study materials, 89 (37%) said for posting, 52 (21%) said for relaxing. The 240 respondents with good success, 69 (28%) of respondents said that they use YouTube to download Music, 15 (6%) said that they use it to download study materials, 115 (48%) said for posting, 41 (17%) said for relaxing. The 240 subjects with sufficient success, 53 (22%) of respondents said that they use YouTube to download music, 7 (3%) said that they said that they use it to download study materials, 136 (56%) said for posting, 44 (18%) said for relaxing.



Of the total 960 respondents, 240 with excellent GPA, 118 (49%) of respondents answered that they use Skype for chatting, 33 (13%) answered that they use it for research, 22 (9%) answered for learning, 67 (28%) Skype said that they use it to exchange information. The 240 respondents with very Good GPA, 139 (58%) of respondents answered that they use Skype for chatting, 28 (11%) answered for research, 13 (5%) answered for learning, 60 (25%) answered that they use it to exchange information. The 240 respondents

with good success, 168 (70%) of respondents answered for chatting, 24 (10%) said that they use it for research, 0 (0%) answered for learning, 48 (20%) answered for exchange of information. The 240 subjects with sufficient success, 195 (81%) of respondents answered that they use Skype for chatting, 14 (6%) responded for research, 0 (0%) answered for learning, 32 (13%) answered for exchange of information.

## **Comments on the Survey Results**

The survey results provide disappointing data regarding the application of ICT in teaching. Indicative statements of teachers in relation to the use of digital media are a clear indication of the dominance of traditional, ex cathedra method of realization of teaching. The current situation in education is a resistor which teachers and managers have towards the application of ICT in the teaching process. It results from the lack of a systematic solution for sustainable development and permanent professional development of teachers and managers to pursue the global educational trends and their application in teaching. In the Education System in the Republic of Macedonia the traditional cognitive models are still dominating and despite the initiatives of official institutions to introduce changes aimed at using ICT the basic level in terms of acceptance of the need for lifelong learning and development aimed at creating a quality product, ie. e. output remains the same. Cultural differences between teachers and students are obvious and drastic. Teachers belong to the so-baby boom generation which is in a cognitive collision with the students belonging to the so-called millennium, digital generation. The low level of education and self-awareness among teachers about the opportunities and threats posed by digital media for them is still an enigma which they abstract thinking that it has no adverse effects on the outcome of learning. Teachers stated that every innovation and change is counterproductive, and students quickly embrace innovation and are open to changes to their implementation. The problem is that as a result of resistance to innovation and change, teachers are not focused on promoting global education through the use of ICT to enable students to use digital media aimed at acquiring the research, design, leadership and other competencies required in the global labor market.

## **Conclusion**

The application of digital media as a communication tool has increased in the past decade as a growing number of companies, organizations and institutions have recognized the true potential and began using as its value-added competitive advantage. They understood that participation in communication with the public through social media, to reach the required information, build relationships, to maintain a high level of monitoring and sharing of information and innovative models of learning.

Statistical indicators of the survey indicate the alarming situation and the necessity of the application of digital media in the process of education, from which much will depend on the success of educational institutions. In this context relevant subjects in the educational process should embrace global trends which affirm the need for the use of ICT in education. In this context, eminent scholars and businessmen emphasize that social media are a powerful additional channel, which first hears service users, stakeholders, media, bloggers, peers, and other influential people and in turn, builds two-way communication for them. Conversations about the organization, its services or products, taking place at this very moment, with or without you. It is a priceless opportunity to build relationships and to shape perceptions about the power of digital media in the educational process. In this process, principals and teachers are a resource for students who are looking for leadership, expertise, and vision solutions. The Internet is a powerful tool for measuring proactive online relations and measuring of output solutions, ie the results of learning.

As a result of the widespread use of the Internet and the creation of platforms for social networking and launch smart mobile technology, the way of communicating and building relationships is especially changed. Educational institutions in developed economies have become more transparent and inclusive.

Intensifying the use of the Internet is due to the popularity of digital global village which erases space and time. Today we witness the online distance learning with access to millions of information and opportunity to communicate with all relevant entities in the field that interests us. The Internet allows instant communication, social media (blogs, microblogs, Educative forums and networks, platforms for sharing photos) which in turn provide social pooling and creating communities that create and share ideas, photos, videos. Social media represents a variety of platforms available on the Internet that allow users to create a profile and share and promote content. Social media platforms are designed to enable teachers and students, ie of all stakeholders in the education system social presence and an opportunity to meet others with their services and products.

In all countries where research is conducted on global trends in media consumption dominant online media activity is the social. Taken together social networking and microblogging take about 2.5 hours from our daily time spent online, as compared to the six hours spent on the Internet means that we spend more than 40% of time on social networks.

Our summarized conclusion is that our present time can be characterized by two words: networking and thinking, and that means living in entrepreneurship and information society. The application of ICT in teaching and everyday life, and the use by teachers as strategies in active teaching would improve the performance of students, and better preparation for facing the challenges of modern times.

Modern scientific and business research are promoting the creation of entrepreneurial and ICT society based on knowledge and networking. Thus, the following recommendations to improve the situation in the use of ICT in education systems:

- Organizing public debates on the topic of the importance and benefits of the application of ICT in learning and teaching in which lecturers and students will participate;
- Organize a debate on the importance and benefits of the application of ICT in learning and teaching that will bring together teachers and students and other relevant entities;
- Intensifying the use of blogging function of exchange of information of all stakeholders in the educational process;
- Creating a service network of teachers and principles aimed at sharing good and negative practices regarding the application of ICT in teaching;
- Promote the benefit in the use of ICT in education through the media;
- Promoting the philosophy of the learning organization in educational institutions.

The purpose of these recommendations is to promote the necessity of changing mental models at the institutional level in order to intensify the activities on the application of ICT in teaching.

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