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Study on training in audiovisual competence of teachers and students in southern Ecuador

Estudio sobre formación en competencia audiovisual de profesores y estudiantes en el sur de Ecuador

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ABSTRACT

Media literacy education is a necessity in digitalized societies, which has been recognized by the Communications Law in Ecuador. However, although Ecuadorian society spends a great deal of time in front of TV and computer screens, neither students nor teachers, in particular, have been trained to deal with the media. Considering such) reality, this article presents a study on media literacy education in the southern Ecuadorian school system, addressed specifically to students and teachers in the cities of Loja and Zamora. To that purpose, we applied a survey to 1,643 persons, and although results are not concluding, they allow some conclusions; mainly, that teachers in Loja present the best training (21.9% are competent), followed by students in the same city (19.5% are highly competent). They are followed by teachers in Zamora (18.9% have received audiovisual training), and lastly, by Zamora's students (16.6% show competence).

Keywords: Media literacy, information and communication technologies (ICTs), media, audiovisual media literacy, schools, teachers' training.

RESUMEN

La educación en competencias mediáticas constituye una necesidad en el digitalizado mundo actual, principio que en Ecuador se encuentra avalado por la Ley de Comunicación. Sin embargo, aunque la sociedad ecuatoriana dedica gran cantidad de horas a estar frente a las pantallas de televisión y computacionales, ni los escolares ni los profesores, en particular, tienen la formación suficiente para hacer frente a los medios de comunicación. Ante tal realidad, este artículo presenta los resultados de un estudio sobre los niveles de competencia mediática en el contexto escolar de Ecuador, entre estudiantes y profesores de las ciudades de Loja y Zamora. Para ello se aplicó una encuesta a una población de 1.643 individuos. Y aunque los resultados no son concluyentes, permiten señalar que los profesores de Loja son los que han tenido mayor formación (en un 21,9% son competentes), seguidos de los estudiantes de la ciudad de Loja (19,5% poseen una alta competencia). Les siguen los profesores de la ciudad de Zamora (18,9% ha recibido formación audiovisual) y, por último, están los estudiantes de la ciudad de Zamora (16,6% muestra competencia).

***Palabras clave**: Alfabetización mediática, tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC), medios de comunicación, competencia mediática audiovisual, escuelas, formación de profesores.*

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of media competence involves the mastery of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the six basic dimensions proposed by Ferrés et al. (2011): language, technology, interaction processes, production and distribution processes, ideology and values, and aesthetics.

The issue of media competence is important in today's education, and one of the challenges is for children and adolescents to become aware of how technology can be used as a learning tool (Aguaded, 2009). This implies, however, that teachers also have to receive adequate training on the matter. With that in mind, this investigation explored the situation of the faculty members' ongoing educational training in digital media. Its aim was to determine whether progress is being made in the training of students and teachers in information technologies (ICT) as a teaching resource required for society today (Castro & García-Ruiz, 2011).

The situation experienced by today's society, with the massive use of information technologies and communication, demands a profound restructuring of the education system and a reflection on the teaching profession (Margalef, 2010). It should be noted that this is a new research topic of interest in Ecuador (Marín Gutiérrez, Díaz-Pareja & Aguaded, 2013), as within the country there are expectations that the media, both public and private, must meet the needs of information, education, and entertainment for all social groups (UNESCO, 2011, p. 95).

The Ecuadorian Communication Law was passed last June 14, 2013[1]. Within it, it is established that the media must produce and broadcast educational content to encourage domestic production, inclusiveness, multiculturalism, citizen participation, diversity, values, national identity, respect and care for nature and the promotion of human rights. Media should also encourage the exchange of information and knowledge, science and technology, as well as cultural and artistic expressions. Also, in this new communication law, Article 71 on common responsibilities of the media establishes the need to "Encourage media education"; that is to say, teach it in schools, through the following: make connectivity and use of ICT part of the curricula in public schools; strengthen and fortify the knowledge on the processes of digital literacy; and train faculty members on the process of digital literacy. These themes are proposed according to the National Plan for Well Being 2013-2017 (National Secretary of Planning and Development, 2013).

Currently, ICT oriented programs are being developed in Ecuador aimed at strengthening the acquisition of this matter (Peñaherrera, 2011). The country is immersed in the process leading to the consolidation of the so-called "media society", where many times people are valued because of "their ability, skill or possibility to access media" (Bellón, 2010). In response to this trend, and in accordance with it, the government of Ecuador is providing public schools with the equipment for Internet-accessible computer labs. The first government initiative that sought to incorporate ICT in education took place in 2002 when computers were delivered to teachers through a training program whose ultimate goal was the pedagogical use of them and was called "Maestr@.com Program" (Peñaherrera, 2012). Shortly thereafter, the initiative came to a stagnation point due to the political situation. However, in 2006 the incorporation of ICT was strengthened through the White Paper of the Information Society, which constituted the framework of ICT policy in Ecuador (National Telecommunications Commission [CONATEL], 2006).

The integration of ICT in the Ecuadorian education sector has therefore meant providing schools with infrastructure, computers, technical resources, educational software, training for faculty members, and the creation of an educational site and educational support. Material on educational standards in ICT has recently been published (by the Ministry of Education of Ecuador, 2012). Studies on the use of ICT of Ecuadorian teachers have also been conducted which deemed the necessity of a plan aimed at equipping them with digital skills, both through professional training as well as autodidacticism (Valdivieso Guerrero, 2010).

In 2009, the Ecuadorian government – through its Ministry of Education and Culture, with the support of the Polytechnic School of the Coast (ESPOL) and the Technical Particular University of Loja (UTPL) – developed a program to progressively integrate ICT in schools. Without this support, it would be very difficult for ICT to be part of teaching and innovation culture. The use of ICT is less developed than in other neighboring countries, due to low investment in telecommunications in primarily marginal areas

(Jurado Vargas, 2005). Added to this, the previous changes in Government complicated the continuity of the implementation process. The first strategy was defined in 2005, yet it is still in its formulation phase due to revisions to the proposals made by previous governments (Guerra & Jordan, 2010). Ramirez (2006) found that the practice of incorporating ICTs in Ecuador depends on the initiatives from academics and researchers.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of 'competence' was linked to the work force and gradually became integrated into the academic world to become the core concept of educational reforms in most countries of the European Union (Pérez Gómez, 2010).

In order to define media competence, it is necessary to understand what media literacy means and involves; the concept being understood as a process through which people come to acquire an education in technology and media. "Media literacy means possessing the ability to use the media, to understand and critically evaluate its various aspects and content, and to communicate even in different contexts" (European Parliament, 2006, p. 11).

In today's society, electronic media merges with digital media, requiring a media literacy that allows citizens to have a healthy, creative and smart media consumption, that allows the critical reception of messages as well as the issuance of digital content and media (Bernabeu, 2010).

Technologies have a transforming power – which Cabero & Guerra (2012) single out – and also allow access to new media and new screens beginning from the time of birth, which can undoubtedly exert an undesirable influence at times. For example, one must be aware of the advantages and risks of being able to access any type of content over the Internet, as one must also keep in mind that the media can manipulate information according to the ideologies that drive said media (Cabero, Duarte & Barroso, 1997).

Media competence is "a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are deemed necessary for a given context (...) that contribute in developing not only the personal autonomy of citizens, but also their social and cultural commitment" (Ferrés, 2007, p. 76). The same Ferrés (2006) mentions that the development of communicative skills related to digital competence presume that the individual has a necessity of competences in audiovisual communication, meaning the ability of an individual to critically interpret and analyze images and audiovisual message as well as expressing themselves with minimal corrections in a/the communicative scope).

MEDIA EDUCATION AND EDUCOMMUNICATION: CHALLENGES FOR THE FACULTY

Media education is based on granting citizens the keys to access and interpret the contents of the media, which would allow them to select the information, sort it, use it, and interpret it in order to finally assess it (Bauman, 2007). The term 'social media' includes a list of old and new media that reaches large audiences: photography, print, advertising, film, radio, television, video, recorded music, video games and the entire Internet universe. When speaking of texts, discourses or products of the media, it refers to, amongst others, programs, movies, images, and web pages that are transmitted through different channels (Benbunan, 2011).

Educommunication seeks that citizens learn to "read and write media". It aims to develop both critical understanding and active participation. This entails training students so that they are not only able to interpret and judiciously evaluate media products, but also that they, themselves, are media producers. Meanwhile, education in audiovisual communication revolves around the knowledge of the languages of communication as well as focusing on critical and creative abilities (Tyner, 2008).

One of the central ideas that the faculty must transmit when teaching media literacy is that the media around us has an important role in our lives; it helps us understand the world and our place within it. That is why it is so important for citizens to study and understand media. Some authors consider that education in audiovisual communication solves the relationship problem young children and teens have with the media, which is considered a detrimental phenomenon that the educator must face (Azinian, 2009). The faculty is also the recipient of advertisements that feature computers as an educational tool, which has

become important in our modern world (Buckingham, 2005). The author infers that teachers must first become literate in ICT in order to teach their students, essentially generating snowball effect) (Wilson, Grizzle, Tuazon, Akyempong & Cheung, 2011). Media education, which should be provided through specific subjects (Pérez Tornero, 2003), would be more effective if the faculty recognizes that it has a role in the creation of a critical consciousness (De Fontcuberta & Guerrero, 2007).

As for the students, it is necessary to work on changing the belief that media education could eventually prevent them from seeing their favorite programs, or that it means that they should share the faculty's point of view regarding media. The ultimate goal is to train and empower students to be cognizant media users while preserving their individual aesthetic and fascinating taste that media had initially awakened in them. Students must not fail to enjoy the communication technologies that are available at their fingertips. They must know their language, resources and priorities to develop a critical understanding of it. It means demystifying, doubting and investigating the media to understand how it works as well as how it elaborates its messages (Schiavo, 2000).

Education in audiovisual communication must seize the opportunity to propose a classroom setting/style that is more about thoughtful dialogue and reflection, both in teaching and in learning, enabling young people to consciously debate and asses their own activity as readers and writers of media. In light of the aforementioned context and considering the influence of media and the digital reality, schools must amenably restructure their curriculum to the emerging era of media competence - both transversely and thoroughly in teaching and learning - in order to form competent citizens in digital media from the earliest possible age.

Students today are considered "digital natives": a generation that was born in a digital world surrounded by new and better technologies; and as such, they should act accordingly with the guarantee to thrive. They should enjoy consuming media and managing ICT; however, this implies that they do so with a critical eye and with different acquired skills so they can understand the messages they receive from any medium, re-elaborate said messages and issue new messages through the media (Gutiérrez, 2008).

This process is called "media literacy", which can be achieved through "media education" (Aguaded, 2013). It implies a critical, active and multi-faceted media education. Teachers, therefore, should be able to develop a coherent educational proposal that integrates the potential of technologies that facilitate the scope of knowledge. Competence in this matter will ensure an appropriate use of media and new forms of communication (Villanueva & Casas, 2010).

Being able to reflectively respond to this new society of information is a requirement that all citizens should consider, especially among the younger generations, where the presence of media at a social level is very high. In the context of an increasing media society, the complex relationship between children/young people and the media arises the need to plan and design an education to learn of these new languages, as well as the necessity to investigate and reflect on how education, in general, and teaching in particular, respond to the central role that media plays in the lives of young people (Pungente & Biernatzki, 1995).

An education in media is needed, understanding that said education of a "communicative competence" is a field of study that overcomes the technological and instrumental view too often confused by politicians, administrators and society at large, which has distorted and ignored the inherent characteristics and qualities that the media has and that its education must face (Aguaded, 2012).

EDUCATING ABOUT THE MEDIA

The evolution of education, especially in a society that changes as rapidly as the one in which we live, has not kept pace with the innovations in the field of information and communication technologies. One could argue that educational models are enabling students to develop as individuals in a society that no longer exists, as it has (almost) been surpassed merely by virtue of the developments in the technological world. In this context, young people need to be prepared for the changes our world faces (Córdoba, 2009). The development of new information and communication technologies are elements increasingly inseparable from all citizens in general, but especially for younger generations who have grown up immersed in a media environment. Therefore, subsequent generations are

regarded as "digital natives", those having grown up immersed in digital technology (Prensky, 2006).

Preparing citizens, especially children and young people, to deal with the challenges of communication in this new information society becomes more necessary as the educational institutions begin to grasp the important role that media are acquiring in the transmission of social knowledge (Gimeno & Carbonell, 2004). In this context, there is no longer a doubt of the media's "powerful influence on citizens and their significant pedagogical potential" (Area, 1995, p. 5), and the need to integrate them in the process of teaching, although – as the same author says – "forms, goals, approaches and processes of incorporation of the media into the school reality" can be discussed and debated (Id.).

While the first experiences with media education started in the nineteen sixties with the consolidation of social communication in all developed countries, it was not until in the nineteen eighties when media education and the necessary skills needed with it became clearly important (Arrarte, 2011). Certainly, educommunication as the basis of education has gone beyond the school walls, and the media have become an outright factor in the teaching-learning process. That is why it is necessary to instruct students on how to receive media content, so that the masses and large audiences can henceforth assimilate properly, using their own skills and competencies.

MEDIA LITERACY IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Media literacy of children and adolescents is a difficult task to perform. First, it is necessary to identify and analyze the references accompanying children in the educational processes developed in the school environment, which ultimately help the young give meaning and significance to the world (Aranda, 2002). To the educational models children have identified, such as family and school, other potential educational agents are included to their vision, such as traditional media and new media.

Media education is not only a responsibility of the school and the educational system. It is also a responsibility of the families, especially the parents as the primary educators of their children. The media, themselves, also have a responsibility and a unique educommunicative potential. It is evident schools should be urged to conform to what society demands: competent citizens of audiovisual media. Young people coexist with media outside the classroom; hence, it is necessary to eliminate the barrier sometimes created by the walls of schools. In many cases, the full potential of the education area is not used because the faculty is not competent in media education and requires specific training (Gimeno, Clavería, Moreno & Oriol, 2011).

Martos (2011) proposes that literary and audiovisual education should start at school, encouraging diversity, imagination and inclusion, while at the same time placing a priority on the development of imagination and critical thinking. Thus, the incorporation of ICT allows the students to be more motivated about self-learning, as it allows them to individually seek the most significant knowledge, make decisions, assess their needs, and prioritize them to design their own learning path. This kind of student is less concerned about rote learning, but is more interested in the content and its significant acquisition (Escudero Muñoz, 2007).

Additionally, technologies favor the individualization of education because teachers can adapt the process of teaching not only to the characteristics and learning rate of individual students, but also to their learning styles, as is affirmed by Cárdenas, Rodríguez & Torres (2000):

> Educational change is a cultural event that occurs as a result of a complex and usually lengthy process in which different factors and actors are involved. Among the determining factors affecting educational change are the zeitgeist, institutional reforms, innovative teaching practices, public policies and educational research. The main protagonists of educational change are teachers, educational authorities, researchers and emerging social forces. (p. 85).

METHODOLOGY

This exploratory research applies quantitative and qualitative methodological resources. It focuses on knowing the level of media competence possessed by young people, teachers and parents. On a first phase, a survey was applied online to students and other teachers, previously validated: "Audiovisual Media skills to measure the level of the student body" and "Audiovisual media skills to measure the level of the faculty". The aim was to analyze whether the degree

of training received by teachers and students in the two analyzed cities (Loja and Zamora)[2] were similar.

The surveys were applied to a population of students between 14 and 18 years of age (between their tenth year of education and third year of high school, i.e., high school students), from 23[3] schools located in the city of Loja and six schools located in the city of Zamora, all either public, private or fiscomisional[4], in addition to the faculty of said educational institutions. In the latter case, the surveys were oriented at determining how they use technology tools to impart their knowledge. The universe consisted of a total of 13,922 students stemming from both cities. The sample of students from the cities of Loja and Zamora amounted to 1,150 and 253, respectively. The sample of teachers in the city of Loja totaled 187 and 60 from Zamora (only 53 questionnaires were filled out, because faculty members teach in several levels, i.e. one teacher can teach classes to tenth graders as well as students in their second or third year of high school).

Throughout the process of investigation, the focus group technique was used in the form of discussion groups that were not analyzed for this article. They were aimed at parents in each of the cities with a minimum sample of eight and a maximum of ten people. It featured a question bank divided by the six dimensions proposed by Ferrés (language, technology, interaction processes, production and distribution processes, ideology and values, and aesthetics). The questionnaire for pupils consisted of 31 questions, while that of faculty members consisted of 45. The analyses of the results were managed with the SPSS statistical software and the evaluation criteria of each questionnaire were based on the article by Ferrés (2011).

RESULTS

The results of the questionnaires distribute the sample unevenly: 53 were obtained from faculty members from Zamora (3.2%), 187 teachers from Loja (11.4%), 1,150 students from Loja (70%) and 253 students from Zamora (15.4%).

The age range of students from Loja (Table 1) who completed the questionnaire varies between 14 and 18. There are a greater number of students aged 16 years, corresponding to the 23.7%, followed by the 17-year-old range (23%). The 20.4% (235 students) were aged 15 years. The 18% represent 219 students of 19 years of age. And finally, 13.8% encompass 159 people of 18 years of age. The answers came from a slightly higher percentage of women (52.2%, equivalent to 600 girls) than men (47.8%, corresponding to 550 men).

Table 1. Age and gender of the students from the city of Loja

Age	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
14	102	117	219
15	105	130	235
16	133	139	272
17	132	133	265
18	78	81	159
Total	550	600	1.150

Source: Survey students from schools in the city of Loja. Own Elaboration.

The age of the students surveyed in the city of Zamora (Table 2) ranges from 14 to 18. The majority of the students were men and women aged 17 years at 25%. Sixteen-year-old students, with 21%, followed it. The 20% includes 49 men and women of 15 years of age. Out of the total of students, 18% (47 children) were of 14 years of age. The least represented age, a 16% of the sample, includes 40 children of 18 years of age. Regarding gender, 51% (130 individuals) were men and 49% (123 individual) were women.

Table 2. Age and Gender of the students from the city of Zamora

Age	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
14	23	24	47
15	24	25	49
16	29	24	53
17	32	32	64
18	22	18	40
Total	130	123	253

Source: Survey students from schools in the city of Zamora. Own Elaboration.

The total number of faculty members surveyed in the city of Loja (Table 3) is 187 teachers, between 22 and 70 years of age. The highest percentage, 31%, corresponds to teachers who belong to the age range of 22-30 years. The second highest percentage (23%) is faculty members aged between 40-49 years. The 21% includes teachers from 50 to 59 years of age, and 20.3% are in the age range of 31-39 years. In total, 54.5% are women and 45.5% are men.

The total number of teachers surveyed in Zamora (Table 4) is 53 people. Their ages range between 24 to 61 years of age. The highest percentage, 38%, is of teachers belonging to the age range of 24-34 years. It is followed by 24%, the age range of teachers from 35 to 44 years. Of the rest, 21% are professors of 45-54 years of age, and 17% range between 55 and 61 years of age. Out of all the faculty members, 79% are male and 21% were female.

Table 3. Age and gender of the faculty members from the city of Loja

Age on record	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
From 22 to 30 years	32	26	58
From 31 to 39 years	19	19	38
From 40 to 49 years	12	31	43
From 50 to 59 years	17	23	40
From 60 to 70 years	5	3	8
Total	85	102	187

Source: Survey of teachers from schools in the city of Loja. Own Elaboration.

TRAINING IN AUDIOVISUAL SKILLS OF STUDENTS AND FACULTY MEMBERS

The results were unexpected, bearing in mind that in the various schools studied, it was noted during the process of implementation of the questionnaires that there was no audiovisual and digital training to guide students towards the use of technological tools. Comparing the results between students from Loja with those from Zamora, we can say that the latter are slightly less competent in media literacy. This could be due to the fact that many schools in Zamora do not have computer labs, nor do they count with teaching staff having media experience. Check the statistics of each group surveyed in both cities in Table 5.

AUDIOVISUAL SKILLS OF THE STUDENT BODY AND FACULTY MEMBERS OF LOJA

A survey on the level of training of audiovisual and digital communication given to the students from the city of Loja showed that a vast majority (66% of the sample) claimed to have "some" degree of audiovisual skills. It was also noted that there were no major differences between the three types of schools surveyed. When asked about how they have acquired that competence, mostly - 39% (361 students) – noted that they had "acquired it by themselves." For 21% (195 students), this competence was acquired "by the help of friends". The 13.6% (156 students) obtained the skills through "workshops". Others, 13.4% (154 students), claim to have acquired this training through "conferences". Only 13% received any skills through "a class from their year ", not specifying which subjects gave them said skills.

Table 4. Age and gender of the faculty members from the city of Zamora

Age on record	Gender		Total	Percentage
	Male	Female		
From 24 to 34 years	9	11	20	38
From 35 to 44 years	7	6	13	24
From 45 to 54 years	8	3	11	21
From 55 to 61 years	2	7	9	17
Total	26	27	53	100

Source: Survey of teachers from schools in the city of Zamora. Own Elaboration.

Table 5. Degree of training received in audiovisual and digital communication

Type		Degree of training received in audiovisual and digital communication			Total
		None	Some	A lot	
Faculty members from Zamora	Tally	13	30	10	53
	Percentage	24,5%	56,6%	18,9%	100%
Faculty members from Loja	Tally	29	117	41	187
	Percentage	15,5%	62,6%	21,9%	100%
Student Body from Loja	Tally	167	759	224	1.150
	Percentage	14,5%	66%	19,5%	100%
Student Body from Zamora	Tally	49	162	42	253
	Percentage	19,4%	64%	16,6%	100%
Total	Tally	258	1.068	317	1.643
	Percentage	15,7%	65%	19,3%	100%

Source: Own Elaboration

Most teachers of the different schools from the sample of the city of Loja (62.6%) answered that they possessed "some" degree of training received in audiovisual and digital communication whereas 21.9% expressed having "a lot" of training, while only 15.5% say they had "no" training in this area.

AUDIOVISUAL SKILLS OF THE STUDENT BODY AND FACULTY MEMBERS OF ZAMORA

The majority of the students from the city of Zamora, 64%, claim to have received "some" training in audiovisual and digital media competence. There are 49 students (19.4%) who say they never received training in audiovisual and digital media competence ("None"). A 16.6% of the students (42) said they had "a lot" of training in this field. As for media competence of the students from Zamora, 59 students (50%) said they "acquired it by themselves." Another 35 students (30%) acquired the skills "by the help of friends" and 23 students (20%) through "conferences".

Of the total number of faculty members surveyed from the city of Zamora, 56.6% (26 teachers) think they have "some" degree of training in audiovisual and digital communication, 18.9% (8 teachers) state they have "a lot" of training in audiovisual and digital media, and 24.5% (19) said they had "none". These figures reveal a situation somewhat more complicated than teachers from the city of Loja.

Although the Chi-square Test (Table 6) indicates no relationship between the variables (0.209), the faculty members from Loja are the ones who have had more training in audiovisual skills (21.9% received "a lot" of audiovisual training); they were followed by the students from the city of Loja (19.5% received "a lot" of audiovisual training). The faculty members from the city of Zamora follow (18.9% received "a lot" of audiovisual training) and, finally, the students from the city of Zamora (16.6% received "a lot" of audiovisual training).

Table 6. Chi- Squared Test

	Valor	gl	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson's Chi-Squared	8.425(*)	6	0.209
Likelihood ratio	7.959	6	0.241
Linear-by-linear Association	0.589	1	0.443
Number of valid cases	1,643		

(*) 0 boxes (0%) have an expected frequency less than 5. The expected minimum frequency was 8.32
Source: Own elaboration

DISCUSSION (CONCLUSIONS)

The partial results of the study show that the degree of training in audiovisual and digital communication is not related to geographical origin or condition of being (teacher or student). The age, on the other hand, plays a key role; for example, in some cases students manifest knowledge of or familiarity with certain tools that they have learned to use by themselves, whereas teachers do not.

The sample obtained was an almost homogeneous one in regards to gender and training skills of each person. The ages of the students from public, private and fiscomisional schools from the city of Loja range between 14 and 18 years. These individuals have "some" training in audiovisual and digital communication. For the most part, students learn by themselves, without supervision or explanations from a third person in relation to the use of technological tools. Most students from the city of Zamora claim to have "some" degree of training in audiovisual and digital communication, obtained mainly by themselves or with "the help of friends".

The age of the faculty members from public schools of Zamora are between 35 and 61 years. Within this group there are teachers of tenth grade to the third year of high school. In terms of time they have been teaching and of which have received "some" degree of training in audiovisual and digital communication, it ranges from having either just started (a few months) to having been teaching for the last 40 years. The ages of the teachers from the schools of Loja are between 22 and 70 years, with a predominance of people in the age group of 22-30 years. To obtain this variable, the questionnaire included information data of the age of the faculty members. The teachers of different schools in the sample from the city of Loja proved to have received "some" degree of training in audiovisual and digital communication.

The use of ICTs promotes a high motivation to learn within the student body. Nonetheless, it is not enough to put computers in schools without teaching faculty members how to use them; computers are necessary, but simply having them is not sufficient. The students have to construct their world with it, and computers are just an educational innovation (McClintock, 2000). One must give greater importance to the educational component of the technological skills than that of merely having the technology without proper use. One must implement/install new technologies in schools to facilitate the mastery of ICT, enabling their faculty and student body to partake in the knowledge society. Technology may be part of our daily lives, but it has not yet managed to enter into the education in Ecuadorian schools as, with inadequate or undeveloped disciplines in educational practices, little significance has been given to this process.

ICTs are an important resource in the knowledge society and as a teaching support, but the road to full incorporation into this new society is not through the screens, but rather through teacher motivation of developing comprehensive educational policies that address the future educational needs. Such a conception, which seems to be more present in the city of Loja than in Zamora, constitutes one of the most important challenges to be democratically resolved in our societies today (Bacher, 2009).

Faced with the reality described, as well as taking into account the discussions with faculty members during the implementation process of the surveys, it is concluded that in the process of acquiring the necessary audiovisual competencies needed to perform well in the increasingly digital world we live in today, motivation plays a central role, both of faculty members as well as the student body.

FOOTNOTES

1. It can be checked at http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ec/system/files/ley_organica_comunicacion.pdf

2. Ecuador is strategically divided into seven planning areas. Zone 7 corresponds to the cities of El Oro, Loja and Zamora. The administrative headquarters of these cities is Loja, considered a city with a high level of culture and education. Zamora, a city that has lately grown considerably, thanks to mining activity-is the focus of the national government, at all levels. El Oro is part of the investigation in a second phase.

3. Aiming to achieve a homogeneous population, 29 schools in the city of Loja were selected initially (of which 23 agreed to participate) and 5 schools in the city of Zamora, with a student population under similar conditions. Surveys of adolescents were performed with informed parental consent and teachers.

4. A "fiscomisional institution" receives state funding, the administration is in charge of the Apostolic Vicariate of each province, and above all it mostly responds to a Christian identity. The Education Act of the country stipulates that this type of establishments may be located in places where there is no public education

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