

SECOND SCREENING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG GEN Z: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MEDIA EFFICACY

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Abstract

A new form of media multitasking is second screening, which describes using a second internet-connected screen while watching media on a first screen, typically, television or other news media. Young audiences can use their smartphones and other connected devices to look up more information, comment on news, voice opinions, share political news and opinions, and engage in civic topics and causes while they are watching television or other primary-screen content. This shift poses an intriguing question: does second screening shift young audiences from media viewing to civic participation? In this quantitative study, the relationship between second screening and civic engagement of Generation Z is examined. It also investigates if and how alternative media use offers an important route by which second-screen practices are translated into civic engagement. The research design used in the study is cross sectional survey (n= 421) with quantitative approach. The study conceptually defines second screening as the independent variable, alternative media use as the mediating variable and civic involvement as the dependent variable. The conceptual argument of the study is that second screening can help to improve civic engagement by enabling youth to navigate between the environments of traditional and digital information.. Given this context, the study adds to the rapidly expanding body of research on the use of hybrid media by analyzing the potential for a relationship between screen-based media multitasking and civic participation in daily media use.

1. Introduction

There is a growing connectivity, simultaneity, interactivity and convergence of media in the contemporary media environment. Viewers no longer have to watch news in a single medium. Rather, they often switch from TV to their smartphones to social media, news sites, video sharing sites, messaging apps to others to watch the same story or topic. This shift is especially significant for Generation Z, who has been raised in a world where smartphones and media that are connected to the internet are a part of daily life.

This concept second screening is especially pertinent to Generation Z as they are heavily immersed in the digitally connected media space. This generation tends to look for information, interact with others, voice their opinions, and discuss matters with others on the go, often via their phones and social networks, as well as traditional media. There is thus the possibility for a far more extensive information journey to begin with a TV news report. For a young viewer, they might see a public problem on TV, Google it on a cell phone, find other news coverage on YouTube, read the comments on social media,

talk about it with fellow friends and finally follow a social cause or get involved in civic engagement. There is a screen but it can be expanded to a wider public life.

This possibility will have significant implications for the understanding of the civic role of second screening. It has been shown in previous studies that the motivation for second screening is to obtain more information and to talk about news. In their study, Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2015) showed a relationship between second screening news and online political participation, a second screen can bring a combination of news consumption and participatory behavior. In the same way, based on data from 20 countries, Gil de Zúñiga and Liu (2017) established that second-screening activities were linked to political expression and participation. Additionally, Chen (2021) showed the relationship between second screening and political knowledge, political efficacy, and political participation, which further highlighted the significance of second screening for political communication.

This is especially significant when looking at alternative and diverse information sources. If the Gen Z comes across a news story on the television, the smartphone can give it instant access to online news websites, independent journalists, social media discussion, citizen-generated media, podcasts, video commentary, and more. This forms a mixed media landscape in which there is a mix of mainstream and alternative. By engaging in these practices, young audiences may have the opportunity to learn about an issue from several sources, not just one media source. (Katz et al., 1973)

Media efficacy takes its roots in Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy which suggests that people's confidence in their ability affects their motivation and behavior. In the media context, confidence in accessing, understanding, evaluating and verifying information can affect the ability to use media resources and the participation in public affairs (Bandura, 1977).

Past studies have found second screening to be a way to facilitate information seeking (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2015), political expression and

participation (Gil de Zúñiga & Liu, 2017), and Chen (2021). Other studies conducted in the past few years also reveal a link between second-screening and media-related skills as well as alternative media use (Liu, 2024; Cheng et al., 2024).

Second screen is basically viewing content on a primary screen while using a second internet connected device. A youth might view a TV news story, then use a smart phone to find more information, read comments, look at social media, talk to friends about it, or put his or her opinion on the internet. Second screening research has shown that this behavior can produce impacts on politics and civic engagement. Gil de Zúñiga, Garcia-Perdomo and McGregor concluded that second screening of news was related to online political participation and might be an effective bridge between TV news and political action. Likewise, a study using data from 20 societies revealed that younger people were more likely to second screen and that those who second screened were more likely to be politically active offline and on social media.

More recently, studies in the context of China have shown that second screening can bolster political participation both cognitively and emotionally. The study revealed that second screening may promote issue switching and help to political participation, especially when the audience is shifted from one issue environment to another issue environment of political information.

The issue is even more critical for Generation Z as they are more likely to be exposed to public issues in a mix of traditional and alternative media. A television news report can raise a question, and then the smartphone can provide instant access to alternate sources, social media commentary, independent commentators, citizen journalism, podcasts, online videos and user-generated content. As such, the distinction between consuming information and engaging in civic communication is becoming more and more ambiguous.

The Pakistani setting is especially significant in studying this correlation. The media landscape in

Pakistan has undergone significant growth in digital and social media platforms as well as traditional television and news outlets. The current research builds on this research strand, however, by specifically targeting Generation Z and by looking at civic engagement as opposed to merely online political participation. It also includes alternative media use as a potential pathway by which second screening can impact civic engagement. Hence the study proposes following hypotheses.

H1: There is a positive correlation between alternative media use and civic engagement among Gen Z.

H2: Media efficacy positively mediates the relationship between alternative media use and civic engagement of Gen Z.

2. Literature Review

However, scholars such as Wohn & Bowe (2016) caution that second screening can lead to fragmented attention, superficial content processing, and reduced retention. Yet, its potential for enhancing political discourse and community engagement remains significant when mediated by social interaction (Lin & Chiang, 2017). The notion of media efficacy is based in Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, which claims that an individual's confidence in their capacity to carry out certain operations directly determines whether or how this individual will carry out those operations. In the field of communication, this notion has been transferred into the field where people's self-confidence related to their ability to use media for effective obtaining and process information is essential.

Nee (2019) examined young people's usage of social media as a news source as well as their reaction towards the information in evolving digital context of news reporting. Young users' use of the latest social media channels and their methods of verifying the news was a primary focus of the research. The researcher concludes that young people turn to social media channels which are more visual and conversational for news rather than relying on the traditional news outlets. The findings suggest that methods of

verification depend on the age, media context, and social media channels used.

Second Screening as a Media Practice:

Second screening is a phenomenon that developed from media multitasking in general. It is the simultaneous use of a secondary (connected) device and consumption of content via a primary screen. The primary screen can be a television, and the secondary screen can be a smartphone, tablet, or laptop, in news consumption. The authors of this study, Gil de Zúñiga et al., defined second screening for news as a "hybrid media practice" that is a mix of watching news on television and using a web-connected device. Today's media landscape has made audiences multi-screen consumers, instead of single-screen consumers. The advent of smart phones, tablets, laptops and social media has led to multiple devices being used to access content more frequently.

Gil de Zúñiga, García-Perdomo and McGregor (2015) have been some of the more important scholars who have developed a methodologically conceptualization of second screening in relation to news consumption. They explored second screening as a hybrid media activity which combines television news and a second web connected device. They discovered that discussions and further information were motivators for second-screen usage. The use of second screens is explained by a part of people's interest in seeking further information and talking about the content they are watching, according to Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2015). Their study revealed that second screening of news was linked to online political participation and that second screening was an important link between television news and political involvement.

Second Screening and Political Expression and Participation

The study revealed that second-screening behaviors may shape political knowledge and political efficacy, either directly or indirectly, and that they may impact political participation directly and indirectly. Second screening can be

part of a larger process of political communication, as shown by Chen's findings, which are pertinent to the current study.

Liu (2024), in research specifically focused on young people's second-screening practices, argued that second screening can potentially be an effective way of engaging young people politically. This is especially important to take into account when considering Generation Z, as young audiences are one of the most immersed in connected media technologies. However, the second screen can not just be an extension of the first screen, but can even give users a heightened sense of their own ability to comprehend and take action on public problems. This is another reason why people are moving away from screens to civic engagement. There is a considerable amount of research that has directly linked the concept of second screening to political participation. On the other hand, two-wave U.S. panel data showed that the second screen of news was a significant predictor of online political participation (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2015).

Loader, Vromen and Xenos (2014) examine a key shift in youth political involvement a shift from traditional ways of engaging in politics, such as voting, party membership or attending political events. Rather, they are starting to take other means of political expression, such as online activism, Internet petitions, social movements and protests. This is not an apathy on the part of youth but a refashioning of political involvement that encourages young people to engage in issue-oriented activities (flexible and relatively fast) instead of longer-term political engagements. In addition, university students tend to be more likely to be involved in decentralized, grassroots organizations with values similar to their own, rather than with a party ideology (Loader et al., 2014).

Siddique et al. (2024) explore how confidence, news inspirations, and engagement behaviors vary between Gen Z and Millennials. Gen Z exhibits higher interactive behaviors (likes/shares), while Millennials demonstrate more deliberative trust in news.

When media offers significant resources for understanding social and political environments, media may foster an increasing dependency of individuals from them, according to Media System Dependency Theory. Such dependency can influence individuals' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976).

Grütter (2022) investigates the positive or negative effects of social media on the political capability of adolescents. Even though various social media channels can promote political activism, misinformation can threaten the trust citizens have toward political institutions. Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2015) found that people who watch news on TV in addition to using a second digital device engage more in online political activities while searching for information online. Developing this concept even further, Chen (2021) analyzed the second screening trend taking place in Hong Kong, claiming that the process of second screening related to news strengthens people's political efficacy, knowledge, and discussions that lead to more political activities.

Recently, Cheng, Yang and Gil de Zúñiga (2024) studied the connection between second screens, media efficacy and alternative media usage. Their research concludes that second screen usage is an effective predictor of media analysis, which boosts trust in media. The boundaries between mainstream and alternative media are becoming more blurred for Generation Z. The potential for alternative media to engage the public in civic life may then be raised through media exposure to public issues and opportunities for public discussion and expression.⁸ Civic Engagement.

3. Theoretical Framework:

A conceptual structure that accounts for the interrelationships of the major variables of a study is called a theoretical framework. It assists researchers to identify the theoretical assumptions under which the study of media behaviors, information processing and civic outcomes can be understood. This paper examines how second screening is related to civic involvement among Gen Z in three

complementary lenses: Uses and Gratifications Theory, Media Dependency Theory and Self-efficacy Theory. These theories together help account for the fact that young people use multiple media, for the ways in which their reliance on the media might influence their view of public issues, and for the ways in which knowledge of how to use the media can help them participate in the civic process.

Uses and Gratifications Theory is a theory that takes the view of the media users as active users who choose media in response to their needs and motivations. The theory views audiences as active consumers of media rather than passive receiver of messages, as they actively select media to meet their informational, social, entertainment and interaction needs (Katz et al., 1973). Gen Z can access a smartphone or other connected device to look up more information, read other points of view, participate in discussions, discuss current events or post news reports while watching television news as part of second screening. Second screening can therefore be interpreted as an active and intentional use of media in which young people try to meet their information and communication needs.

Media Dependency Theory holds that when people turn to media as a means to understand and interpret their social environment, the influence of media increases. Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976) believe that reliance on media content may have an impact on what people think, feel and do, particularly if media have important information functions. If Z-Generation is dependent on several media sources, it can be more significant for their understanding when it comes to political or social issues. In second screening, the young audiences can receive information from different sources, including TV, social media, online news and other digital sources, to build their understanding of public affairs and their skills to navigate between multiple sources to find information. Theoretical explanation for why exposure to media and seeking information might lead to civic orientations and participation is provided by this dependence. On the other

hand, Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977) suggests that people's thoughts concerning their capacity to execute a specific behavior determine their motivation, effort to execute the behavior, persistence and behavior. In media context, media efficacy is the degree of confidence with which people can access, comprehend, assess, corroborate and act upon media information. One particular aspect of efficacy is media access, which is especially relevant for the present study, because it is not necessary that multiple media sources will inevitably lead to civic involvement. The generation Z user who is more adept at evaluating the information, finding credible sources, comparing stories from different media and forming opinions from that media content may be more able to turn media use into civic engagement.

All three theories together give a good theoretical basis for this research. Uses and Gratifications Theory helps to understand the reasons for second screening among Generation Z for information-seeking, interaction, and opinion expression. Media Dependency Theory holds that media information can impact on young people's understanding of political and social issues. Self-Efficacy Theory (S-T) is an explanation that explains how confidence in the use and appraisal of information through media can change the use of media into meaningful civic actions. In light of this, the present study defines second screening as a significant media practice, and media efficacy as a possible explanatory pathway by which media use might impact civic involvement. This theoretical approach is aligned with the study's main objective of exploring if and how the multi-screen media use among Generation Z is related to their civic and public life.

4. Method and Measures:

The present study used quantitative research design to explore the relationship between second screening and civic engagement among Generation Z, with the mediation role of media efficacy. A cross sectional survey method was used for the numerical data collection, as regarding the Generation Z respondents at Pakistan. The study

included 421 respondents belonging to different areas of Pakistan and all from Generation Z. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data via online mode allowing the participation of respondents from various geographical regions of Pakistan. Responses from throughout the country helped ensure a range of diversity in how Generation Z uses media and civic engagement behaviors. Respondents were oriented to the purpose of the study and were urged to answer the questionnaire according to their personal experiences in the use of media and civic activities.

Likert scale was used to analyze the data from scale Strongly Agree=5 to Strongly Disagree =1. Data were analyzed statistically that were suitable for quantitative research. To explore the proposed mediating role of media efficacy, mediation analysis was carried out to assess the mediation effect of media efficacy between second screening and civic engagement. The direct impact of second screening on civic engagement, the relationship between second screening and media efficacy, the impact of media efficacy on civic engagement, and the indirect effect of second screening on civic involvement via media efficacy were assessed.

Measures

The questionnaire included measures of the three constructs of the study, second screening, media efficacy and civic engagement.

Second Screening was defined as the viewing (and/or interaction) of content on a secondary digital screen (e.g., smartphone, tablet, laptop, or another internet-connected device) alongside watching or interacting with content on a primary-screen (e.g., TV) device. The measure measured how often Gen Z respondents engaged in activities like looking for more information on the primary-screen media they were consuming, checking social media while consuming primary-screen media, commenting or sharing information, discussing media content online, and finding alternative information while consuming primary-screen media. The higher the

score, the more likely they were to engage in second-screening behavior.

Media Efficacy was examined to determine the competence and confidence levels of the respondents to use, interpret, evaluate and engage with the media. It was concentrated on the respondents' confidence in finding relevant information, assessing the credibility of media messages, differentiating between reliable information and understanding media content.

Civic Engagement the respondents of Generation Z were asked to engage in activities related to civic and public life. These behaviours encompassed discussing social and public issues, sharing information about civic issues, expressing opinions on an issue of public concern, becoming involved in online civic discussion, and supporting a social cause.

5. Results and Discussion

Second Screening habits

The second screening behaviours of generation Z were evaluated through a series of statements that capture the respondents' simultaneous use of digital and traditional media, information seeking online, social media use, fact-checking, involvement in discussions online, and multiple screen use to understand political and social information. Each item has a mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) presented. The mean scores are higher the more people agree with the respective statement and, as a result, the more they are inclined toward the measured dimension of second screening behaviour. The average score of Second Screening was $M = 69.71$ and the standard deviation was $SD = 12.26$. The results show a high level of second screening by Gen Z.

The results show that the Generation Z practice of second-screen behavior is used to complement, compare, verify and enrich the information they receive from traditional and live media. People were more likely to access more information online related to a political topic or a significant public event when they discussed this subject with others, indicating that they sought to

supplement and elaborate on information they heard or watched on TV or radio. Along with live television, the use of hashtags and trending discussions adds to the interactive aspect of second-screening, as viewers watch the television broadcast and can follow the public reactions and commentaries at the same time. One finding also shows that those who watched the news on TV are also making comparisons with information they find on social networking sites. Such comparative practice will familiarize users with different interpretations of the same event and can lead to a more critical and diversified approach to the media. Furthermore, respondents believed that multiple-screen usage could help them to engage and understand media content, implying the possibility of cognitive and participatory advantages of second screen. A second dimension of importance is that of the concurrent discussion(s) that take place online while following a live political and/or social event. During live broadcasts, commenting, reposting and reacting to issues are examples of active forms of second screening that go beyond passive viewing to enable audiences to participate in real-time and express themselves. This behavior is especially relevant to the second-screen-civic engagement study. Lastly, people said they used additional digital sources to check information politicians, journalists or commentators provided during television or radio broadcasts.

The results suggest a role for second-screening in fostering the attention and understanding of Generation Z to political and social topics. Users who indicated they are more likely to be engaged with political and social media content via the second screen were not necessarily more positive about this experience, as some were less likely to agree.

There was some variation in respondents' perceptions of the impact of second-screen media on their engagement with political and social content, suggesting a possible link between multi-screen media use and civic engagement. The findings also reveal how much respondents use TV and social media to construct a better

understanding of political and socio-cultural matters. The use of several informational sources in a complementary fashion demonstrates the opportunities second-screening can offer in enriching users' worldviews and interpreting information. The results also explore the respondents' use of instant responses to news online. This is a trend towards social media as a platform for real-time public reaction and discussion, but it is not a second-screening trend in and of itself, rather it is the desire for reactions online. The impact of social media content on the political interpretations of the respondents, when watching news or public affairs programs, is also relevant for the cognitive aspect of second-screening. Co-exposure to TV and social media can help shape, reinforce or extend political awareness because additional information and perspectives will be presented. Finally, respondents' use of independent digital news websites indicates an inclination towards alternative media consumption. This behaviour is seen as a pattern of media use, however, and not as a direct indicator of second-screening. Overall, the findings indicate that second-screening is not simply the use of a second screen at the same time as the first, but could also mean integration, political interpretation, engagement and exposing oneself to different perspectives. Concurrently, alternative media use and preferences for online reactions need to be considered as complementary dimensions and not as proxies for second-screen usage.

The results will give information on second screen practices, usage of digital and alternative media and the relationship between the traditional and online media. Results show the degree of second-screen behavior if any: using additional digital devices when watching or listening to traditional media to obtain additional information. Participants also said they listen to political and current affairs podcasts to learn more about their topics. Podcasts are a type of digital and alternative media usage, but they do not necessarily require simultaneous media usage and therefore should not be considered as a form of simultaneous second-screening. The results

also discuss user attitudes toward alternative media, specifically their perception that they can offer alternative points of view that aren't as commonly seen in the mainstream media. Finally, the preferences and trust respondents hold towards independent digital news, as well as their preferences for television news, offers insight into changing media source preferences, but not directly. A second dimension is the online talk about traditional media consumption. This is a better measure of second-screening as it reflects the concurrent association of watching traditional media and using online media or content or participating in conversations. The findings also take into account the possibility that "second screen" exposure allows respondents to be exposed to a broader range of views that shape their understanding of political information. This

Table 1: summary of descriptive table

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic	Variance Statistic
SS	421	21.00	105.00	69.7173	.59796	12.26914	150.532
ME	421	10.00	50.00	36.6651	.32988	6.76859	45.814
CE	421	7.00	35.00	23.0808	.24704	5.06887	25.693
Valid N (listwise)	421						

has brought light to the cognitive and informational benefits of multi-screen media use, which may result in Generation Z facing different perspectives when they consume political information across platforms. Lastly, the information that respondents were sharing with each other from the various media sources is an indicator of the process of information circulation between individuals and indicates an act of informational and persuasive influence. While this behavior could have civic implications, it is not a direct measure of second-screening. In general, the results reveal that second-screening is interrelated with general digital media use, alternative news sources, perspective taking, online interaction, and peer-to-peer information sharing.

Table 2: Normality test (kurtosis, skewness) of all variables

	Skewness Statistic	Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	Std. Error
SS	-.450	.119	1.899	.237
ME	-.671	.119	1.401	.237
CE	-.411	.119	.912	.237
Valid N (listwise)	421			

Second Screening and Civic Engagement

Civic engagement among Generation Z was assessed through seven statements measuring respondents' involvement in online and offline civic activities, participation in public discussions, engagement with social and community issues, and the use of digital platforms for civic participation. The descriptive analysis included the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of each item. Higher mean scores indicate greater agreement with the respective statement and, consequently, a higher level of civic engagement.

The results give an overview of respondents' engagement with civic activities both online and offline. The findings show a range of participation in online campaigning – ranging from petitions to hashtag activism – highlighting that Generation Z have easy access to voice their support for social and political issues on the digital platform. The respondents also indicated involvement in conversations about public and community issues, highlighting that civic engagement is not just about receiving information but also sharing ideas and discussing issues that affect the community. Further, civic

engagement behaviors are incorporated based on the social and community issues activities, which suggests that civic involvement can be a behavioural aspect that shows that some respondents put their civic awareness and civic opinion into practice. The results also explore involvement in organised civic engagement, including seminars, campaigns and community meetings. These types of engagement typically take more time, effort, and social interaction than online engagement and are good indicators of the willingness of respondents to engage in more formal civic processes. Lastly, the findings reflect whether respondents have engaged in civic offline behaviours in the aftermath of knowing about them digitally, such as community meetings or protests. This illustrates the possibility of an online connection to civic involvement. Overall, the results indicate that civic participation among Generation Z includes many types and dimensions, from the use of online platforms to express civic sentiment and engage in civic conversation, to participating in organized civic or community events. The findings thus underscore the promise of digital media for democratizing, informing and, perhaps, extending civic involvement off-line. Item measured respondents' use of digital platforms to contact representatives, institutions, or organizations regarding public issues $M = 23.88$, with a standard deviation of $SD = 5.06$ indicate a moderate level of digitally mediated institutional engagement. This form of civic participation demonstrates how digital technologies can reduce the communication distance between citizens and public institutions. For Generation Z, social networking sites and other digital platforms can therefore serve not only as sources of information but also as channels through which civic concerns are communicated directly to relevant organizations or representatives.

Whether the use of a second screen encourages respondents to participate in discussions concerning political and social issues is particularly significant for the present research because it directly connects second-screen behaviour with civic

engagement. A high level of agreement would indicate the extent to which respondents perceive simultaneous use of multiple screens as facilitating their participation in political and social discussions.

Overall, the descriptive findings provide an important picture of the civic engagement patterns of Generation Z. The seven items demonstrate that civic engagement can occur through multiple forms, ranging from online campaigns and public discussions to participation in community activities, communication with institutions, and offline civic action. Importantly, the inclusion of digital-media-related items indicates that contemporary civic engagement is increasingly interconnected with young people's everyday media practices.

Mediation of Media Efficacy and Civic Engagement

Media efficacy was measured to understand how much respondents from Generation Z feel good about their ability and confidence to access, understand, evaluate and use information provided from the media. The findings indicate that respondents demonstrated an overall positive level of perceived media efficacy across understanding, evaluating, verifying, and discriminating media information. Respondents reported confidence in their ability to understand media messages presented through television, social media, and other digital platforms, suggesting that they feel capable of comprehending diverse forms of media content. They also indicated an ability to critically assess information received from different media channels rather than accepting all information uncritically. Furthermore, respondents demonstrated confidence in identifying credible and trustworthy media sources, an important competency given Generation Z's exposure to information from both traditional news organizations and user-generated digital content. The results also suggest that respondents feel capable of verifying information before accepting or sharing it, including consulting alternative sources when encountering questionable or

conflicting claims. Finally, respondents expressed confidence in distinguishing reliable information from unreliable content. This ability is particularly important in the contemporary digital environment, where Generation Z encounters multiple narratives, misinformation, and rapidly circulating content across diverse platforms.

Cumulative score of Media Efficacy with $M = 36.66$ and $SD = 6.76$ indicates that the respondents feel that they can integrate information from different platforms. This competency is closely linked with second screening as many second screeners will be exposed to TV, social media, websites and other digital sources simultaneously. Additionally, participants' perception of their capacity to create their own opinion using media information suggests a moderate level of perceived efficacy of opinion formation.

The results show that the general level of respondents' media efficacy was positive. They indicated themselves confident in discussing social and political affairs based on information from the media, indicating that they have a media content understanding and evaluation ability. Respondents also showed trust in the use of media information for social and civic activities, signifying media's role in informing and engaging social aspects in public affairs. Moreover, their answers showed that they possessed a positive attitude in accessing, comprehending, assessing, confirming and efficiently using media information. In general, the findings indicate that people see the media as a significant source for informing them and enabling them to participate and engage in civic life.

Table 3: Path Coefficient Correlation Matrix (Mediation of Media Efficacy)

	Effect	Gender	Age	Education	Income	Second Screening	Media Efficacy
Second Screening	Direct	0.09	0.12	-0.14	-0.04		
	Indirect	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Media Efficacy	Direct	0.13	0.19	0.12**	0.10	NA	-0.31***
	Indirect	-0.01	-0.08*	0.14	0.22	-0.05***	NA

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4. Summary of Hypotheses testing

Relationship	T statistics	P value	Confidence Interval	Result
Second Screening $\rightarrow$ Civic Engagement	0.34	0.56	[0.000, 0.222]	Rejected
Second Screening $\rightarrow$ Media Efficacy $\rightarrow$ Civic Engagement	6.01	0.00	[0.0201, 0.0619]	Supported

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Results suggest that second screening in the eyes of generation Z is a complex of interconnected behaviors: searching for more information, contrasting news narratives, watching real-time reactions, checking the facts, joining online discussions and using second screen to enhance the understanding of political or social topics.

The practices illustrate that second screening is not just the co-use of two devices but has more to do with an information seeking and a more interactive way of using media. In general the results are expected to show the level of the perception of Generation Z regarding their ability to act and think in the current media

environment. The role of the media cannot only be measured based on the exposure of media, but also on the respondents' confidence in understanding, evaluating, verifying, comparing, using media information materials effectively.

Analysis of Media Efficacy thus serves as the basic picture of respondents' perceived media-related capacities, and the correlation, regression and mediation analyses that follow can then be used to see if there is a statistically significant relationship between these capacities and second screening and civic involvement. In digital media the dimensions concerning the appraisal of information, the identification of credible sources and the verification of information, as well as the distinction between reliable and unreliable information, are especially relevant. Generation Z are often exposed to information through many different platforms, and being able to evaluate and comprehend information is a crucial aspect of using media effectively.

Limitations

The study is based on the self-reported perceptions and behaviours of the respondents. Social desirability and ability to recall media use behaviours accurately may lead to overestimation of media efficacy, second-screening, verification and civic involvement. The study does not seem to directly observe participants' actual behaviour, although a number of items depict simultaneous media usage. Therefore, the results of reported second-screening may not be a true reflection of the actual use of multiple screens among respondents. The media-efficacy results are the respondents' level of confidence in understanding, evaluating, verifying, and differentiating media information. Respondents are not necessarily accurate or effective in these tasks, confidence does not necessarily imply that.

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