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Digitalization Of Memories – An analysis Relationship Between Autobiographical Memory And Digital Photography

ABSTRACT

Photography has been used as a mnemonic since its early years. It has the power to move the past to the present by breaking down the structure of time. Presenting a static image, it records an image of a past time. Looking through family and childhood photo albums, the person embarks on a journey through the past in his/her memory. Following digitalization, the function of photography has been changed in accordance with the transformation of it from analogue to digital. Photography is not only a mnemonic but also contains the function of the enjoyment of individuals, creating self, self-presenting to others. In terms of storage, screening and sharing, digital photography is more convenient and accessible than analogue photography. For these reasons, people's interest in digital photography has been rising and it encourages taking/recording images at the moments that will create their memories in the years ahead. The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between autobiographical memory (contains information about individual experiences, memories) and forgetting/remembering between digital photography. The nature of the subject required the use of both qualitative and theoretical analysis of the participants' social media usage. The research data was collected conducting semi-structured interviews with participants who shared their images about individual lives and memories on social media. In addition, benefiting from the observation technique, the participants were requested to look at both printed and digital photo albums and asked if they remember the corresponding memories. The theoretical insights are based on critical theory. The studies reveal that memories become digital and affect memory due to rising motivation to take and share pictures on the social media.

KEY WORDS

Autobiographical memory. Digital amnesia. Digitalization of memories. Memories. Screen memory.

1. Introduction

The increase in the product range of digital technologies and expanded usage areas has enabled people to satisfy their needs via digital devices. The dynamics that a society needs most are news, entertainment, and information. It is at one's fingertips to learn about any event anywhere in the world by pressing the TV button, to communicate with people who are far away with the touch of a phone, to reach all kinds of information and people who seem to be inaccessible as you enter the internet.

With the widespread use of the internet and mobile technologies since the 2000s, digital platforms such as social media, social forums, and e-mail connect people together interactively and help bring people into each another's awareness and allow them to discover commonalities and contact one another.¹ In this new form of communication people have begun to gather around a network, independent of time and space. Jan Van Dijk points out that the new society is an extension of the information society and states that the world has become a global network.² In today's digital world where speed and consumption are of great importance, digital technologies that spread to all areas of life have become socially crucial with the development of communication technologies. The internet that surrounds daily life brings people around a network like nerve cells day by day, so our society becomes a digitally dependent one.³

According to the digital report of January 2020, 7.75 billion people use the internet all over the world. This number corresponds to 55% of the world's total population of which 5.19 billion are unique mobile phone users, 4.54 billion internet users and 3.80 billion active social media users and the numbers are gradually increasing.⁴ Looking at the statistical information, it can be seen that more than half of the world is connected to the Internet. Social media is the most common platform of internet users. From every corporation and organization to mere individuals, from large companies to small companies, to institutions, everyone has a social media account. Photos and videos are prominent on social media so that people record and share their experiences, emotions, memories in their life with technological devices in order to gain the likes of others and increase their number of followers/friends from social media.

Photography is one of the most effective memory tools throughout history. The power of photography lies in recording candid-time and capturing the moment forever. When a person looks through family and childhood photo albums, they embark on a journey through their past and their memories. Digital photography is easier, more accessible to screen, share, print and it costs less compared to analogue photography. The prominence of digital photography on social media has changed the function of photography. Photography is not just a mnemonic but also serves as a function of the enjoyment of individuals, socialising, creating the self and presenting the self to others.

Instead of seizing the moment and focusing on the present, people take photographs and record images of moments such as eating or going on a trip with family or friends etc., which will create their memories. This is both a result of rising interest in digital photography and increased motivation to share these images on social media. Each day, approximately 500 million people share Instagram⁵ stories, 300 million people share Facebook⁶ stories and 500

¹ CHAYKO, M.: *Superconnected – The Internet, Digital media & Techno-Social Life*. California : Sage Pub., 2017, p. 6.

² DIJK, V. J.: *The Network Society*. London : Sage Pub., 2012, p. 19.

³ EYREK, A.: *Screen memory - amnesia in the cultural industry*. Istanbul : Doruk Pub., 2020, p.170.

⁴ KEMP, S.: *Digital 2020: 3.8 Billion People Use Social Media*. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2020/01/digital-2020-3-8-billion-people-use-social-media/>>.

⁵ NEWBERRY, C.: *37 Instagram Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2020*. [online]. [2020-01-09]. Available at: <<https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-statistics/>>.

⁶ NEWBERRY, C.: *33 Facebook Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2020*. [online]. [2020-01-09]. Available at: <<https://blog.hootsuite.com/facebook-statistics/>>.

million tweets⁷ are sent. Generally, the contents of these stories are about the private lives of the respective people, captures of their daily life and their individual emotion and experiences. It is interesting to see the statistics of the amount of time people spend on social media daily. The world's internet users are spending an average of 6 hours and 43 minutes online each day of which 2 hours and 24 minutes are spent on social media on all devices.⁸

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between autobiographical memory and the effect of forgetting/remembering related to digital photography. To this end, firstly, the concepts of „photography“, „digitalization of memories“ and „amnesia“ will be opened to discussion and the theoretical background of the study will be drawn. Semi-structured interviews of qualitative methods were used in the study and the argument of this study was supported by data collected conducting semi-structured interviews with 20 participants, aged 15-60, who have shared images about their individual lives and memories on social media. In addition, the participants were requested to look at both digital and printed photo albums and to tell the stories of the photo. This study reveals that, memories that become digital affect the autobiographic memory due to the rising motivation to take/share pictures on social media.

2. Social Media and Digital Photography

Challenging the irreversibility and permanence of time, the photograph captures the moment and records it forever. The power of photography is that it produces a copy of the reality of events and experience. The subject of photography is the past and it presents us with a moment's image, of events that have already happened and usually ended.⁹ Walter Benjamin explains the function of the photography to save the images of a moment forever: „*The true image of the past flits by. The past can be seized only as an image that flashes up at the moment of its recognizability, and is never seen again.*“¹⁰ According to Benjamin the saving of the captured image with the help of camera lights is linked to the relationship between past and present. John Berger also expressed: „*The photograph is an automatic record through the mediation of light of a given event: yet it uses the given event to explain its recording.*“¹¹ As Benjamin claims the objects or people seen in the photography represent culture and society within a historic moment. The photography breaks lose of its chains as a part of the past within time's flow and it turns the past into an object of tender regard.¹²

Douwe Draaisma underlines the function of photography not losing anything as photography is described as having a „moment of immortality“ and as being capable of „freezing the moment“. He also expresses the relationship between memory and photography.

„*The fact that the photography 'had forgotten nothing' is typical of the gist of many photographic metaphors. As analogies for visual representations photographs particularly stress the immutability of what is stored as a memory: they suggest a memory that forgets nothing, that contains a perfect, permanent record of visual experience.*“¹³

⁷ SMITH, K.: *60 Incredible and Interesting Twitter Stats and Statistics*. [online]. [2020-01-09]. Available at: <<https://www.brandwatch.com/blog/twitter-stats-and-statistics/>>.

⁸ KEMP, S.: *Digital 2020: 3.8 Billion People Use Social Media*. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/blog/2020/01/digital-2020-3-8-billion-people-use-social-media/>>.

⁹ SAGLAMTIMUR, Z.: Relationship Between History and Photography from Walter Benjamin's Point of View. In *Journal of Communication Theory and Research*, 2013, Vol. 37, No. 37, p. 237.

¹⁰ BENJAMIN, W.: Selected Writings: 4 (1938–1940). In EILAND, H., JENNINGS M. W. (eds.): *On the Concept of History*. London : The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003, p. 390.

¹¹ BERGER, J.: *Understanding a Photograph*. England : Pelican Book, 1972, p. 292.

¹² SONTAG, S.: *On Photography*. New York : Rosetta Books LLC., 1989, p. 8.

¹³ DRAAISMA, D.: *Metaphors of Memory: A History of Ideas about the Mind*. England : Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 121.

The fact that photography is easily moved from one place to another and its archiving ability of it provides the most effective memory tool, quite unlike other memory tools. Another reason is the function of photography to remind people and society about their past and to keep their memory alive. It is also possible to see this in family albums which present images of the past to family members or relatives and keeps family togetherness and their memory alive. Looking at the photos of family dinners, religious celebrations or weddings of family members, each of the family members returns to the family's memories and those moments. Like the emphasis of family photos on memory and togetherness, the person's own photographs include the history of a person, the representation of the characteristics that make the person an individual. „*The photography is privileged to help man view himself, expand and preserve his experiences, and exchange vital communications—a faithful instrument whose reach need not extend farther than that of the way of life it reflects*“.¹⁴ According to Andre Bazin, the photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it.¹⁵

In modern life, photography has become a consolation to the situation caused by the fear of being transient, lost or knowing his past, not having roots, based on the need of people to feel valuable.¹⁶ Social media appears as the area where this consolation is realized. Through social media, a person has found the chance to present the image of self which is the person he/she wants to present to the others. A person who presents his own image by sharing a selfie on social media as in the Mirror Stage Theory, gives a message saying „*I'm also here and I exist*“.¹⁷ According to Jean Baudrillard, these phenomena contains a message beyond „*I'm also here*“ it also says „*I'm an image, Look!-Look!*“¹⁷

The moment of encountering with another on the social media is hidden in the new definition of the public sphere. In this regard, the home page of social media platforms is a sphere which is described by Hannah Arendt as a public sphere where people see each other and are seen by each other. On the other hand, a personal page is a sphere in which people scrolling on social media are walking on the streets of the digital city, they discover the external world, present their lives and their phenomena to others and also they discover the similarities or differences of each other. The people who create and present their own image to others on social media, within the feeling of acceptance and appreciation, open the doors of their lives to one another. The more they include others in their networks (if they increase their followers and friends), the more they become visible and famous. The most efficient way of being visible is to bring the visual to the fore.

The photography shared on social media about their daily lives creates autobiographical memories of people. Even if still a memory tool, the digital camera is now pushed as an instrument for identity construction, allowing more shaping power over autobiographical memories.¹⁸ Moreover, the inevitable effort of memory to recover the past in autobiography is frequently structured according to flashes, incidents, spots of time, fragments that bear resemblance to the photographic freezing of the current of life.¹⁹

How will the motivation of presenting autobiographical memories to others and at the same time recording moments through photography and video affect memory? The functioning of memory can give us clues about the answer to this question.

¹⁴ ARNHEIM, R.: On the Nature of Photography. In *Critical Inquiry*, 1974, Vol. 1, No. 1, p.160.

¹⁵ BAZIN, A.: The Ontology of the Photographic Image. In *Film Quarterly*, 1960, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 8.

¹⁶ ERKONAN, Ş.: Family Photographs: Exploring The Role Of Photography In The Construction Of Family Memory With The Ethnographic Method. In *Journal of Cultural Studies, Moment*, 2014, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 127.

¹⁷ BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Transparency of Evil- Essays on Extreme Phenomena*. England : Verso, 1993, p. 23.

¹⁸ VAN DIJCK, J.: Digital photography: communication, identity, memory. In *Visual Communication*, 2008, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 71.

¹⁹ ORVELL, M.: Picturing Ourselves: Photography and Autobiography (review). In *Biography*, 1998, Vol. 21, No. 3, p. 352.

3. Amnesia and Autobiographical Memory

When we talk of memory the first thing that comes to mind is the physiology of the brain. However, memory is quite dynamic so as not to fit into only one explanation and definition. Societies need memory to conserve their identity and cultural heritage just as people need memory to make life meaningful and to exist. Memory is one of the most discussed concepts under different disciplines after the 20th century. Pierre Nora attributes this to eradication of memory. The memory according to Nora, is like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded.²⁰ If there are no seashells anymore, amnesia occurs. The basic meaning of amnesia is described as not remembering past experiences and losing the ability to recall.

The memory process involves three main memory stages: encoding, storage and retrieval. The three forms of memory storage, which has been used in memory studies since 1960, states that memory is structured in three stages: sensory, short and long-term. According to the studies, the information is first encoded in the sensory memory. The information remains here for a time and it will be erased forever if not perceived within 3-4 seconds. The perceived information is transferred to short-term memory which will be stored in memory for 15-25 seconds. If the information is not coded and rehearsed, it will be rapidly lost from this store. The information which is recoded and rehearsed, is transferred from short-term memory to long-term memory where it is permanent and can be stored for a long time. Recollection occurs by recalling information from the stored area.

There is a constant flow of information and images on social media. At this speed and fluidity, every piece of information that is not transferred to short term memory faces loss. Erik Fransén, from KTH - the Royal Institute of Technology, in 2013 researched short term memory and how the brain uses the knowledge that enters through neuron cells. As a result of this research, he found that since the capacity of short-term memory is limited, when a person is browsing online, she/he could be losing important/needed stored information and can easily become hobbled by information overload. Fransén especially said that short-term memory cannot respond to this information bombardment. Fransén says: „*When you are on Facebook, you are making it harder to keep the things that are 'online' in your brain that you need. In fact, when you try to process sensory information like speech or video, you are going to need partly the same system of working memory, so you are reducing your own working memory capacity*“.²¹

As stated by Fransén, the capacity of short-term memory is limited against the information and images flow on social media. Any information and images that are not transferred to short-term memory will not be remembered after a while. If the information is not coded and rehearsed, it will not be stored in the long-term memory and amnesia will occur.

Another important research about digital technologies and memory was conducted by the Kaspersky Laboratory in 2015 on how digital devices and internet affect memory. The research shows that people trust the memory of digital devices instead of their own memory and entrust their memory to the devices. The result of this research in which the laboratory surveyed 1 000 people in the United States aged between 16 and 55+ shows that almost all (91%) of those surveyed agreed that they use the internet as an online extension of their brain and admitted that their digital devices serve as their memory tool. Kaspersky Lab. has termed this phenomenon „*Digital Amnesia*“: the experience of forgetting information that you trust in a digital device to store and remember for you. The regulation of this high-tech world threatens to outdate categories such as past and future, reality and expectation, and memory and future design.²² As can be seen from the research, as the technology advances, human memory becomes weaker.

²⁰ NORA, P.: *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*. In *Representations - Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory*, 1989, No. 26, p. 12.

²¹ *Online Time Can Hobble Brain's Important Work*. [online]. [2020-01-09]. Available at: <<https://www.kth.se/en/aktuell/nyheter/online-time-can-hobble-brain-s-important-work-1.415391>>.

²² RIGEL, N.: *Dream Blindness*. Istanbul : Der Pub., 2000, p. 47.

Autobiographical memory is the type of memory in which one refers to personal experiences and personal events of said individual's life. This memory is divided into episodic and semantic. Semantic memory stores common knowledge such as names and colour and episodic memory receives and stores information about temporal dates, episodes or events, and temporal-spatial relations among these events. Episodic memory stores personal experiences and events.²³

Social media and autobiographical memory research is also of interest for academic studies, as are social media and people sharing moments from their daily lives. It is necessary to separate the research positively²⁴ and negatively^{25 26} in terms of its effect on the memory. On the one hand studies show that social media helps people with their memory, but also sharing the memories on social media has proven to have a negative effect.

4. Methods

In order to understand the role of photography in the construction of an individual's autobiographical memory, semi-structured interview methods were used as one of the qualitative methods. Semi-structured interviews consist of open-ended questions and enable the diversification of questions depending on the interview flow.²⁷ Within the scope of this research the interviews were conducted with participants aged between 15-60. Open-ended questions were used but depending on the nature of the interview the use of other questions spontaneously were employed. The interview questions are shown in Scheme 1. In addition, following the observation technique, the participants were requested to look at both printed and digital photo albums and asked if they remember the corresponding memories.

Theme	Key Point/Questions	Objective
Social Media Usage	How much time do we spend on social media per day? Which social media do they have? How often they post on social media? What are the types of content post on social media?	To ask users of each social media platform how often they engage To learn from users the types of content posts
Sharing Individual Memories on Social Media Digitalization of Memories	What is the meaning of individual memories for you? Do you share about your personal life on social media? And Why?	To learn their motivation for taking photos and sharing on social media.
Remember Printed/ Digital Album and Photography	Do you have a printed photo album? Do you print digital photos? What is the difference between digital or printed photography to remember? Do you remember your all digital photos in your social media accounts?	To find out the relationship between sharing memories on social media and autobiographical memory.

SCHEME 1: Interview questions

Source: own processing, 2020

²³ TULVING, E.: *Episodic and Semantic Memory*. London : Academic Press Inv., 1972, p. 386.

²⁴ WANG, O., LEE, D., HOU, Y.: Externalising the autobiographical self: sharing personal memories online facilitated memory retention. In *Memory*, 2017, Vol. 25, No. 6, p. 772–776.

²⁵ TAMIR, D., TEMPLETON, E. M., WARD, A. F., ZAKI, J.: Media usage diminishes memory for experiences. In *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 2018, Vol. 76, No. 1, p. 161–168.

²⁶ HENKEL, L. A.: Point-and-shoot memories: The influence of taking photos on memory for a museum tour. In *Psychological Science*, 2014, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 396–402.

²⁷ ADAMS, C. W.: Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation. In NEWCOMER, E. K., HATRY, H. P., WHOLEY, J. S. (eds.): *Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews*. California : Jossey-Bass Co., 2015, p. 493.

Every interview theme has been chosen in order to provide a basis for determining the relationship between digital photography and the autobiographical memories of people sharing on social media. Before their interview, participants were informed about the scope and aim of the research. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participant considering data loss. I transcribed the voice record and sent back the transcription back if the participant requested. The participants were informed that the data would not be used outside this research and that they could read the transcriptions of the interview if they wished. The semi-structured interviews should be at least half an hour and at most 2 hours.²⁸ For this reason interviews were designed to last not more than 45 minutes to 1 hour. Interviews were held where people wanted them to be and where they felt comfortable which was mostly in their homes. One of the advantages of being in their home for the research was to look at photos which were framed and put on the wall or on the table. Anonymized codes were used to protect participant privacy and names in the research (I1, I2, I3..).

Sample size in the qualitative researches can be determined by content, scope and data saturation of the study by looking at similar studies. If the sample size allows the researcher to achieve similar results that repeat, in the preliminary analysis part of the data and the interview results, data saturation is assumed to be achieved. In this study, it was ascertained that 20 people were sufficient in terms of data saturation of the research.²⁹

5. Results and Discussion

The results of the research were divided into three sections as to the interview questions. The first section will inform us about participants' social media usage, the second part about their postings on social media and the last part on the effect of printed and digital albums on their memory.

5.1 Social Media Usage

In this study, it is seen that participants spend an average of 2 hours 10 minute daily on social media which is similar to the average social media use of people around the world per day. It is observed that the participants' access social media from their smartphones, computers, tablets and laptops, each of them has a smartphone and all of them have at least two digital devices at their houses.

They use social media to communicate with others, to follow the news, to share photography and videos, to get information about people they have not seen for a long time and to stalk their exes (?!?!). All of them have accounts on at least two different social media platforms and have WhatsApp. They prefer this application to send messages, images, audio and video and to communicate with groups of which they are members.

²⁸ WILSON, C.: *Interview Techniques for UX Practitioners*. Boston : Elsevier, 2014, p. 25.

²⁹ LOFLAND, J., LOFLAND, L. H.: *Analyzing Social Settings – A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. California : Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1984, p. 62.

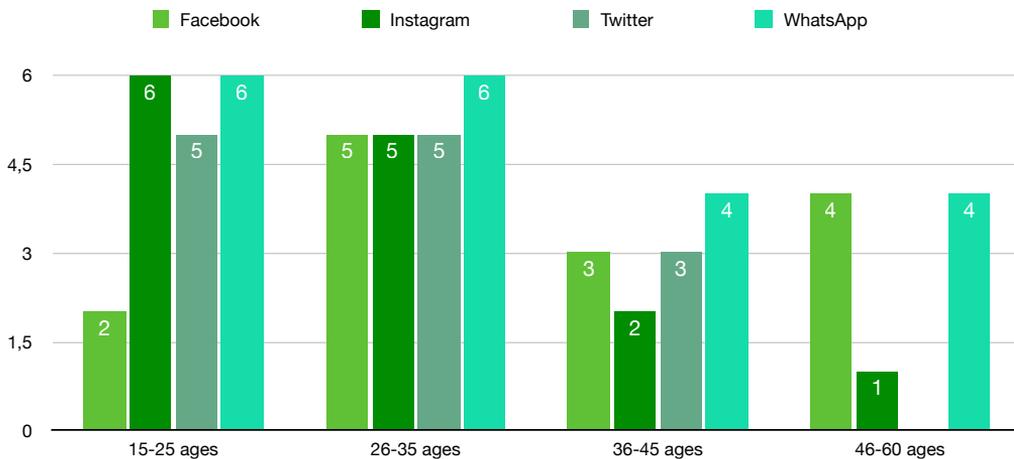


CHART 1: Distribution of participants using social media platforms

Source: own processing, 2020

As can be seen in Chart 1, 14 out of 20 participants have Facebook and Instagram accounts and 13 out of 20 have Twitter accounts.³⁰ The result has shown that people aged between 15–45 mostly used Instagram and people aged between 36–60 mostly used Facebook and WhatsApp.

17 years old participant said that: „I don't use Facebook because older people use it more“.

26 years old participant said: „Facebook is outdated and old-fashioned“.

53 years old participant said: „There is a lot of social media platforms. I cannot follow all of them. I use Facebook because I have more friends there. Most of my friends prefer this platform“.

In this research, people aged 15–45 define themselves as more active and accessible on social media compared to people aged 45 and over. Social media is also a place to spend time especially for those aged 55 and over. For this reason, they prefer to follow and read the posts rather than sharing. Participants' posting frequency for social media appears to be 4–5 posts each day.

It was observed that the content changed depending on the social media platforms that are being used. Generally, Facebook users share informative posts, funny videos, news, their own images and videos, their emotions and opinions. Twitter users share their insights on news and daily politics whereas Instagram users share their own images and stories taken throughout the day.

5.2 About Sharing on Social Media

„What is the meaning of individual memories for you?“ was asked to participants. They describe their memories as „being with family“, „being with a close friend or relative“, „going on a trip“, „celebrating birthday parties“, „attending wedding parties“, „eating dinner with friends or family“.

Another question asked to the participants was „Do you share your personal life on social media?“ All of them answered that they share bits about their personal lives. It was observed that young people aged between 15–35 post more frequently about their private lives compared to people aged between 36–60. The older generation seems to limit sharing their personal life publicly and they don't share it with everyone.

³⁰ In this research, social media platforms were limited to Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram according to the social platforms mostly used by them.

To learn their motivation for sharing personal life on social media we asked: „when you go on a trip or when you meet family/friends do you take photographs and share them on social media?“ 16 out of 20 stated that they record and share photography of those occasions and 4 out of 20 stated that they take and record of their memories but don't share on social media because they don't want to inform people about their personal lives. Also they were asked:

„Why do you share?“ It's been stated that they value people's admiration and that they want to share happy memories with others.

The participant aged 19 said: „I use social media for sharing. It does not mean anything to be there if you don't share“.

The participant aged 33 said: „I don't often share about my private life. I share photography but only of my travels“.

The participant aged 59 said: „I take pictures with my family and share it. I share the videos of having fun with my grandchildren. My friends post comments under my post. It makes me happy“.

It appears that sharing and posting on social media makes it possible for a person to stay in contact with others and as the 19 year old claims social media's purpose is to share memories.

5.3 Remember Printed/Digital Album and Photography

14 out of 20 participants have printed photo albums, and all of them have digital albums. The printed photo albums of people aged 15–25 belong to their childhood years, which were collected for them by their family. They haven't got printed photographs of the recent years.

23 years old participant said: „Almost everything has become digital. It seems unnecessary to me to have a printed photo album“.

60 years old participant said: „We grew up with family photo albums. It is a tradition for us. I have photography all over my house. When I see them, I remember good old days and it makes me happy“.

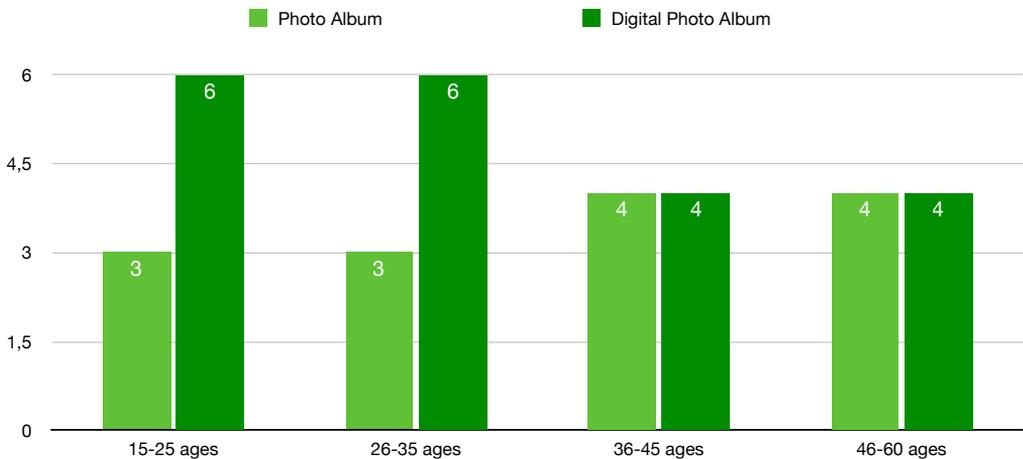


CHART 2: Participants having a printed or digital album by age

Source: own processing, 2020

The printed photo albums of the participants were looked at with the participants themselves. Even though photography presents a static image, it consists of the present time and it is a memory tool. That is why participants remembered their past and stories of photography and they returned to their memories as they looked at the static images of photo albums. As they looked at the photos they remembered respective stories and memories of the photos.

One 53 year old female participant looked at her travel photo album on her Facebook and she stated that she remembered the trip with its broad lines but couldn't remember particular photos of flowers and trees. She felt as if she was looking at them for the first time. A 17 year old freshman had shared photos of his high school time on his Instagram. He looked at the album in which there is a photo of boats and oars but, he couldn't remember this photo. He said: „I think I may have liked it but, I can't remember putting this photo on my album exactly“.

A 20 year old participant underlined the difference between printed and digital photos. „It is very clear in my mind when and where my printed photos were taken. I also remember the moment of caption. For example I have a photo that was taken in the funfair and I clearly remember the exact moment. If you ask me about a photo took 15 days ago I couldn't remember where it was taken“.

A 39 year old participant said: „The printed photography is easier to remember because there aren't many of them. You print it and put it on the wall or put it on the table. These are in front of your eyes. The digital photography is easier to forget because you take it and you don't look at it afterwards“.

11 out of 20 participants have difficulties remembering the digital photos on their social media. Generally, these photos were about flowers, objects, nature photography and their own selfies. When they looked at their printed photos, they experienced past emotions and memories and told details of the photo's stories. On the other hand, digital photography was observed to be only a tool of enjoyment and sharing on social media for young people. These young participants became happy when they looked at their childhood photos then they took a photo of these photos to share on social media.

Smartphones make photography easier and increase the speed of sharing on social media. Digital devices such as a computers, hard drives, and cloud technologies are being used for the storage of digital photography. Younger people back up their photography and videos using cloud technology and hard drives, while older people only store them in their smartphones.

6. Conclusions

Social media platforms put friends and family members in touch or help them establish relationships with new people. Each day, hundreds of millions of people share their experiences on their social media. Social media allows us to get hold of these moments by sharing them with others. People's interest in digital photography has been rising and it encourages them to take/record images at the moments which will create their memories in the years ahead. The study shows how effective dependence on social media has come to affect people's memory and their ability to remember. In this research semi-structured interviews with 20 people have been conducted to discover a direct link between sharing individual photography on social media and its effects on memory. Increased motivation of sharing on social media distracts us from our memories and limits the ability to remember particular moments. More than half (11 out of 20) of the participants have difficulties remembering the digital photos on their social media. These photos were often taken for sharing on social media. It can be concluded that the motivation to share on social media diminishes the recollection of memories and moments.

As the study shows, printed photo albums are still important to older people whereas the young keep their memories on digital platforms. Younger people trust their digital devices instead of their own memory to store and remember. This research highlights how digital technology affects memory and how it may change the perception of memories for people in the future.

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