


# Call for Papers

## Emerging Adulthood and Media Use: Adding a Developmental Perspective

A Special Issue of the *Journal of Media Psychology*

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Emerging adults worldwide (ages 18–29) constitute the largest active group of media users. Media use is vital to emerging adults because during this life stage they face many transitions (e.g., school to university or work, leaving their parents' household), and they need to use media to have information about new opportunities and problems. Further, they use social media constantly to stay in touch with their existing social networks and to construct new ones in the new contexts. Currently, most media research lacks a developmental foundation. This special issue proposal aims to integrate the developmental perspective of emerging adulthood into research on media use and assemble papers on media use in relation to emerging adults' psychological, social, and cognitive development.

### **Emerging Adulthood and Media Use: Adding a Developmental Perspective**

We are currently witnessing unprecedented expansion in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), with social media, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and online learning becoming more and more part of our everyday lives. Beginning in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the pace by which ICTs are affecting our everyday life. The possibility – and necessity – of being constantly connected has dramatically changed the way emerging adults (ages 18–29) relate to their peers, access information, and engage in social relationships. ICT use may also have a profound influence on their health and well-being, for example on the sleep-waking cycle, cognitive development, level of attention, perceived life quality, free time, and stress.

The main goal of this special issue is to highlight papers on the uses of technology in relation to emerging adults'

development with a particular focus on their life transitions and challenges. We are mainly interested in contributions that describe the impact of technology on psychological, behavioral, social, physical, and cognitive changes during emerging adulthood, and how technology may be used in both positive and negative ways. Although much media research takes place on college students, for the most part it currently lacks a consideration and integration of theory and research on emerging adults, for example, the importance during emerging adulthood of identity explorations; changing relations with parents; relations with friends and romantic partners that are often in flux and may be long-distance; and educational preparation for entering adult work. We aim in this issue to encourage authors to think developmentally about media use among 18–29-year-olds in order to understand better the diverse functions that media use may play in their lives. Given that the impact of technology use on emerging adulthood development is a global phenomenon, we are interested in contributions reporting findings from diverse and underrepresented population groups, including those in low-income and middle-income countries.

Specific areas of interest could be, for instance, the following:

- How does using social networking sites (SNSs e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Tik-Tok) influence emerging adults' emotional well-being?
- Does the massive diffusion of information technologies affect emerging adults' time use? For example, is there a negative correlation between ICT use and physical exercise?
- Under what conditions do ICTs become negative for people's health and negatively affect their well-being? Are there inter-individual differences in how technology affects health? For instance, differences in gender, ethnicity, immigrant status, or cultural context.

- What are some positive uses of ICTs by emerging adults? For example, access to education, playing games with people in different countries and cultural groups, learning about a wide range of topics, and staying in virtual touch with family and friends.
- How is technology used during emerging adults' life transitions (e.g., from school to university or work, moving out of parents' household)? In what ways is it beneficial during these transitions? Does it present any risks or liabilities?
- How are ICTs used in emerging adults' relationships – with parents, friends, and romantic partners? How much time spent in important relationships is now “virtual” and how much is in-person? Does virtual time supplement or replace face-to-face contact?

## Criteria for Selecting Manuscripts

Papers are welcome from all countries and cultures and with diverse methods, from large surveys to small qualitative studies and ethnographies.

## Timeline and Criteria for Sending Proposals

Preliminary proposals are due **December 1, 2021** for priority consideration, although proposals can be submitted on a rolling basis. Proposals should include a tentative title and a 300–500 word description of the proposed paper. All abstracts must be sent to the Guest Editors by email (Martina Benvenuti – [martina.benvenuti2@unibo.it](mailto:martina.benvenuti2@unibo.it); Elvis Mazzoni – [elvis.mazzoni@unibo.it](mailto:elvis.mazzoni@unibo.it); Jeffrey Jensen Arnett – [arnett@jeffreynett.com](mailto:arnett@jeffreynett.com)). Decisions about consideration in the special issue will be made by **end January/early February 2022** with full papers due 6 months afterwards

(**August/September 2022**). Please note that approval of a proposal will not guarantee publication. All submitted full papers will be anonymous peer-reviewed and will follow the *Journal of Media Psychology*'s editorial process.

## Manuscript Preparation and Submission

To submit a manuscript, please follow the manuscript submission guidelines as detailed under “Instructions to Authors” on the journal's website (<http://www.hgf.io/jmp>) and select the name of this special issue when submitting through *JMP*'s editorial management system at <http://www.editorialmanager.com/jmp>. Address your cover letter to the special issue's Editor, and note in your cover letter that your manuscript is being submitted for consideration for publication in the special issue on “Emerging Adulthood and Media Use: Adding a Developmental Perspective”.

Any questions about proposals should be directed to the special issue Guest Editors:

Martina Benvenuti: [martina.benvenuti2@unibo.it](mailto:martina.benvenuti2@unibo.it)

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Questions regarding editorial process should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief ([nick.bowman@ttu.edu](mailto:nick.bowman@ttu.edu)).

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