

Everyday life musical information seeking about Eurovision song contest among its fans, motivations for seeking and social implications / Danit Lidor

Abstract

The Eurovision Song Contest was established in 1956 and became the biggest musical contest in the world. The contest was popular in Israel during the seventies and was used as an escapism from the everyday life. However, in the recent years, it seems that being engaged with it in Israel has turned into a taboo, as the media reviews less and people talk less about it. A model that can explain the decline in engaging with the contest in Israel is called ACS (Artistic classification system). It claims that the music industry divides genres by hierarchy and that the higher the genre is located, the more access it gets. It can be assumed that since the Eurovision is nowadays perceived as less popular, the less access leads to an information about it and searching about it takes more effort. In addition, since the Eurovision is perceived less popular and less reviewed, its fans need to make a greater effort to find partners to their sympathy.

Therefore, there are three main goals to this research: Examining the Eurovision fans information behavior, exploring the motivations that derive the fans to search information and the Eurovision's sphere's influences on its fans, and investigating the connection between the information behavior and the social need for sympathy towards the contest. The Eurovision's sphere wasn't investigated much, hence its importance to investigate it within these important aspects. Therefore, this research used theories from three areas: uses and gratifications, information behavior and weak-tie networks.

The uses and gratifications theory discusses the ways that the addressee's needs. One of the main aspects that the research focused on is information behavior. This aspect explores the sum of the behaviors related to the sources and to the information channels regarding a certain topic, and it contains active and passive

searches, active disregard and information use. This area contains three main aspects that were used during analyzing the findings: everyday life information seeking, musical information retrieval and information sharing.

The last aspect of this research is discussion groups – weak-tie networks, expressing emotions and support. The discussion groups are held as an online area where people can meet others like them and communicate about a common interest. An important term that relates to the members' need to join the online communities is "weak-tie networks". It copes with the relationships that are being created around the same interest between the member and others whom he doesn't know personally, but communicates with on a daily base and depends on their support. The weak ties' main characters are supplying access to a variety of opinions and information and supplying empathy and understating.

The research focused on six questions that coped six aspects: The Israel fans' meeting with the Eurovision and their sympathy's start, information seeking, strategies for sharing information, tendency of updating about the contest, motivations for seeking and sharing information about the contest and implications that derive from the sympathy for the contest and from the information behavior. In order to answer those questions, mixed method was taken, with an integration of qualitative and quantitative methods. The first phase was qualitative and contained fifteen semi structured in-depth interviews that contained questions about two aspects of the research: information science aspect and the social aspect. The second phase was the quantitative and contained a questioner which was based on the interviews and was held among 178 Eurovision fans. Those fans are members in two Facebook groups which are dedicated to Eurovision, one of them is the main group for the contest in Israel.

The findings attempted to characterize the fans' first meeting with the contest and their sympathy's start. There was found that the fans started to watch the contest in their youth and thanks to a family tradition of watching it. Moreover, it demonstrated three aspects of information behavior: seeking information, sharing information and

the tendency for using the information sources. In seeking information, the research discovered that the fans used all the sources that they had gained and was perceived as reliable in each period, and that information seeking among most of the fans was held during the period of the whole year. The information process illustrated that some of the fans didn't start seeking for information about the contest right after sympathizing it. Among those who did search, there was an integration of all the sources, when each period had its own main sources: in the past, the fans had mainly used traditional sources like written journalism, television and radio. Afterwards, they also used online sources that provided only information, like the international websites that cover the Eurovision and afterwards social platforms. Nowadays, the main source is Facebook groups devoted to the contest. The findings demonstrated that the veteran fans that had experienced seeking the information about the contest, joined the social platforms. Their reason for joining those platforms was adding a social aspect to the seeking information process, after experiencing it alone for a long period. An important finding was that the information that was found about the contest – influenced the fans' judgment of the songs that was participating in the contest.

In the aspect of information sharing, the research found that most of the fans doesn't share information often because others share the information before them. The shared information were about unique aspects of the contest, opinions and release. The fans use specific platforms for sharing the information they want to share, thanks to their knowledge about each platforms' role. The most popular platforms were oral and online social platforms. In the tendency's aspect, there was an increase in the tendency of using the information sources among the fans through the years, when the fans prefer to use the sources during the season when all the news about the contest are being published ("The hot season").

The qualitative findings investigated the motivations that has led to the information seeking and sharing and the implications that derived from the information behavior and belonging to the fans community. The motivations were divided into two

