

Digital Society: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

The growing interaction between technologies and the society led to the development of the concept of digital society. At no other time in human history have people's interactions and behaviors been so extensively recorded and remembered in perpetuity.

Digital society is characterized by information flowing through global networks at unprecedented speeds. It represents a fundamentally new situation for people and social institutions. This paper provides an introduction to on digital society, including its meaning, applications, benefits, and challenges.

KEYWORDS: *technology, digitalization, digital technology, digital society, digital culture*

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INTRODUCTION

The word "digital" has its origins in the Latin word *digitalis* and refers to digits. Digitalization is a key motivation for the concept of digitality, which has ubiquitous presence and influences everyday actions. Digitalization refers to the actions of transforming previously analog actions into digital. The increase in digital technologies is depicted as an inevitable destiny [1].

Digitalization is the process of integrating information communication technology to work, service, and production. It is helping individuals and organizations reimagine work and personal life. Digital technologies have become part of our daily living.

They are reshaping our society, economy, and industries at an incredible pace. Banking, health records, and other personal information are increasingly relying on digital networks. Big data, mobile and cloud technologies, and the Internet of things offer unimaginable opportunities in many areas including healthcare, transportation, energy,

agriculture, manufacturing, business, and government. They can promote democracy, cultural diversity and human rights such as the freedom of expression and freedom to information [2]. In the digital world, information is the oil and analytics is the combustion engine.

Societies too must adapt digital technologies not only to protect their members' livelihoods, lifestyles, and longevity but also to offer their communities the services they need for future growth. In the past 20 years, society has undergone digitization at a breathtaking pace.

WHAT IS DIGITAL SOCIETY?

Society is increasingly becoming digitalized and connected. The idea of digital society comes from the results of the modern society in adopting and integrating information and communication technologies (ICT) at home, work, education, and recreation. A digital society (previously called the knowledge society or network society) is a community in which everything runs on digital

technology, where paperless and electronic means are the norm. It is a progressive society formed as a result of integration of advanced technologies into the society and culture. Digital society is regarded as a new form of culture. As illustrated in Figure 1, there are three different cultural spheres: spiritual, social and technological [3]. Digital society mainly depends digital economy, advanced telecommunications, and wireless connectivity systems [4].

Among the emerging technologies and field that responsible for developing a true digital society include information and communication. The public sector components of the digital society include electronic government and smart city. There are four main levels of digital society [5]:

- *Digital Society*: The sum of the interactions, information, value, and priorities generated between people, organizations, and things in a digital, connected world.
- *Digital Platforms*: Collections of digital businesses that form global value chain systems. Platforms attract buyers and sellers to transact on a specific collection of digital services.
- *Digital Business*: New business models and designs connecting people, businesses, and things to drive revenue, greater efficiency, improved safety, and higher quality.
- *Digital Society Infrastructure*: The institutions and foundational elements of the physical and digital worlds, including critical physical infrastructure and cyber infrastructure.

Recognizing these layers within digital society gives regulators and society a framework to place new tools, options, and policies.

APPLICATIONS OF DIGITAL SOCIETY

The digital society is one in which technology is an invariable part of human life. It is a kind of progressive society that has been formed as a result of adapting and integrating advanced technologies into the society and culture. Three common applications of digital society are considered here.

- *Education*: We are in a digital revolution that is changing the way people teach and learn. Digital society invites students and teachers to work together to explore the challenges and changes faced today in technology, media, ethics, and government. Several courses on digital society has been launched. This effort requires updating the entire curriculum. Digital society is driven by a student-centered flexible curriculum model that integrates concepts, content and context through inquiry, as depicted in Figure 2 [6]. Teachers and

students are encouraged to let their interests and passions guide their way through the courses [7]. It is not enough for education to only teach software skills, societal skills, or even coding skills. Students must be prepared for the post-digital world.

- *Business*: Digital transformation refers to the use of technology to improve the reach and performances of businesses. Ways of doing business in the digital society are based on digital technology. The digitalization has profound impact on businesses. Digital technologies make up complexes that bring together, people, services/goods, business processes, and other aspects into a single system. Businesses that cannot adapt to the digital world or resist digital transformation will disappear from the competitive environment.
- *Children Welfare*: Children use new technology to socialize with known and unknown people. Digital society has made online social networks part of children's daily life. Online bullying, sexual abuse, child pornography, and identity thefts are among the threats that digital society generates for children. Many parents underestimate the risks that children are exposed to online. The online environment of information exchange and social dynamics need to be taken into account in the evaluation of children's psychosocial health [8]. The school program can be used to equip children for digital society, as shown in Figure 3 [9].

BENEFITS

Digital technologies speed up time, scale, and reduce distance. They are sophisticated enough now that the possibilities seem almost limitless. The fact that we are all going to die is an undisputable reality. Some are now using digital technologies to deal with the issues of death, dying, and grief. They do so with the hope of being able to create digital memories to leave behind for future generations, the opportunity to "live on" [10]. Each national government should actively promote the concepts of "digitalization with no one left behind," allowing citizens to participate at any time and place. As shown in Figure 4, developing a digital society has been one of key governmental policies in Estonia [11].

CHALLENGES

The digital society has an all-encompassing transformation on the lived experience of those lucky, or unlucky. This transformation impacts consumers, users, citizens, and workers and all that may be regarded a single "digital person." Socially acceptable behaviors tend to change as our society does. The

unforgiving nature of the Internet and lack of foresight can often lead to past tweets, posts or pictures coming back to haunt individuals. For example, the ubiquity of smartphones and their integration within our daily lives represents one of the greatest threats of living in a digital society [12].

The digital society evolves in both rich and poor countries alike. Trust in digital institutions has declined, while concerns about data protection and privacy are increasing. Regulation in a digital world is challenging and complex. As society becomes more and more digitalized, the question becomes who sets the direction of the advance of society? Society needs balanced digital challenges based on a full understanding of the policy issues. Since digital society is new, it has not yet been included in the broader field of social work education and practice. Other challenges are [13]:

- Digital citizenship, that is, the democratization and massification of digital connectivity and access to all individuals;
- New forms of organization – in business, government, economy and society - where the capacity to innovate and to lead talented people is fundamental.

CONCLUSION

Digital technologies are changing the communities before our eyes. We live in an increasingly digital society. The digitalization of society affects the foundations of all parts of our lives. The digital society has evolved and developed as a result of digital interactions between technologies, people, organizations, and things. It is built from the interactions of all members of society. More information about digital society can be found in the books in [14-27] and the following related journal:

- Digital Society
- International Journal for Digital Society

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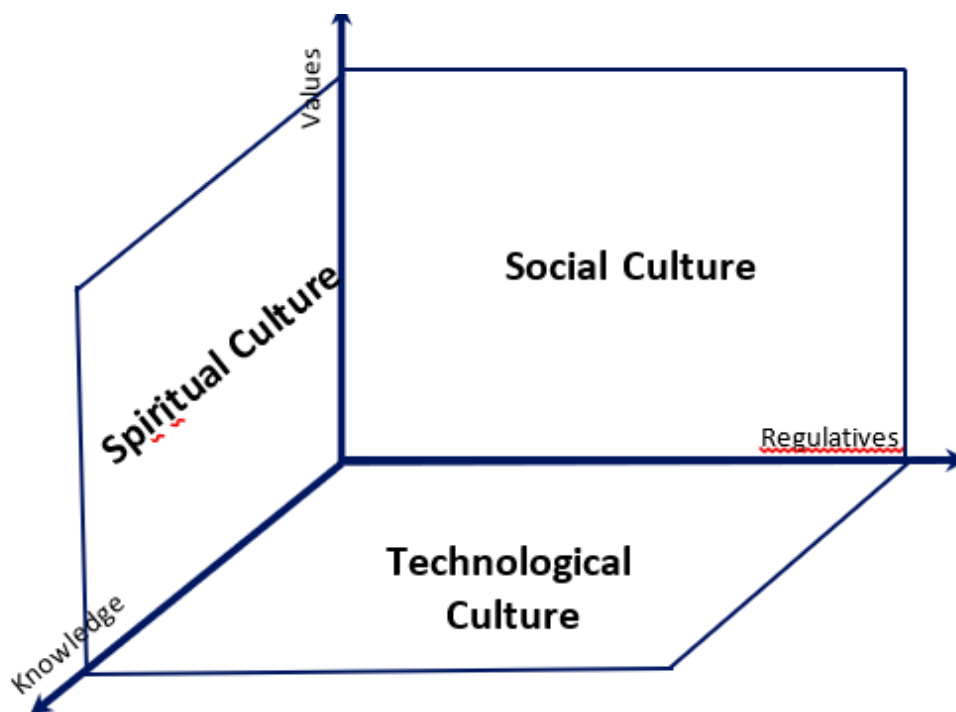


Figure 1 Three different cultural spheres: spiritual, social and technological [3].

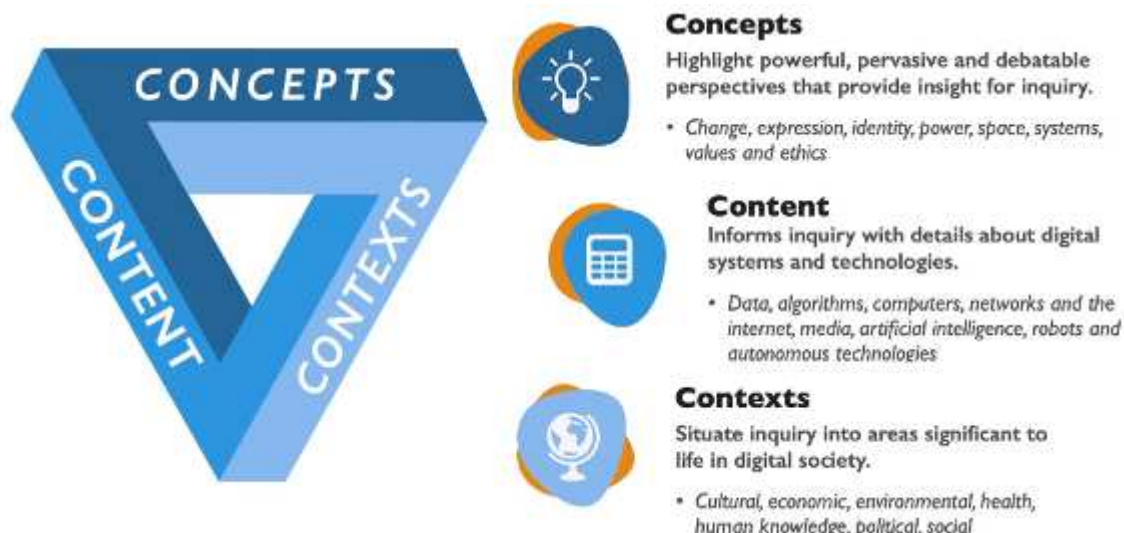


Figure 2 A student-centered flexible curriculum model that integrates concepts, content, and context [6].



Figure 3 Children can be equipped for digital society [9].



Figure 4 Developing a digital society in Estonia [11]