ITD Special Issue: 'ICTs for promoting sustainable information society and harmony'

http://explore.tandfonline.com/cfp/est/titd-cfp-special-issue-icts-for-promoting-sustainable-information

- *Full paper submission deadline: January 31, 2018*

The aim of this special issue is to promote, as well as to disseminate research on *how* Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in this ever-increasing networked society are critical to a harmonious society. We view a 'harmonious society' as a peaceful and balanced 'connected whole' in a transformed social dynamics. In this ideal situation, there is a sustainable exchange of resources and development occurs through mutual agreements of the relevant stakeholders who are defined by their attributes of 'power, legitimacy and urgency' (Mitchell et al, 1997). In this case, 'information' is an inevitable resource, which may not reduce ignorance and uncertainty in the decision-making processes but may create a space that could potentially disrupt the normative state of certain social order (Islam, 2011). It indicates a tension between 'empowerment' versus 'disempowerment'. As "all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony" (Aurobindo, 1972, P. 2), the goal of development is apparently not only to ensure social harmony, but also to minimize the elements that undermine or disrupt the 'connected whole'. Sein and Harindranath (2004) synthesized the development debates from three perspectives : modernization, dependency, and human development, where human development requires removal of major sources of unfreedoms (Sen, 1999) and the arrangement of social inclusion where people can develop their capabilities for a better livelihood (Qureshi, 2010). While, Sen's functionings and capabilities have been complemented with institutional forces in an analytical framework by Bass, Nicholson and Subrahmanian (2013); ideally, the information society is seen as a 'classless and conflictless' inclusive community (Masuda, 1980), which strives to use technologies to diminish structural barriers, democratize information, balance between power and dependency, and transform human values. However, in reality, it faces several challenges of; for example, political and religious extremism, infringement of privacy and security, disparity of wealth and social disconnection, digital divides in internet access (Choudrie and Vyas, 2014; Choudrie and Lee, 2004; Choudrie et al, 2003) and changes in the prevailed power dynamics with the blend of expected and unexpected consequences.

We also experience the influence of social harmony on ICTs in the other direction. Where we can detect higher levels of social harmony (admittedly a somewhat subjective assessment) we can expect more desirable outcomes from ICT4D interventions. Specifically, communities that are more 'harmonious' ie. better organised, well lead, with positive relationships, motivated, capable, confident, and experienced with development, will do better with ICTs than communities that do not score well on these attributes. Part of the challenge with scalability is therefore how to deal with the less harmonious (dis-functional) communities so that they can also benefit; ie. how to stimulate social harmony - with ICTs - so the technology can contribute further to the human development indices that the SDGs and ICT4D targets.

With this spirit, as we are unavoidably intermingling towards a complex environment of information society, we need to critically investigate the roles of ICTs in the 'social construction' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967), especially in the contexts of peace-building processes , cooperation, and development of human capital for creating a harmonious 'sustainable world'.

Topics addressed

Given the aim and scope as stated above, we welcome contributions, that could be empirical quantitative studies; studies focused on investigations, examinations, examples, critiques, perspective; qualitative studies that consider case studies, observations, ethnography, interpretivism, experiments, or critical realism studies that can emphasise aspects drawn from the following topics:

- Social topics such as, gender, age, education, digital divide, social inclusion, exclusion and health
- Technological or innovation topics such as, big data, open innovation, sustainability, environment, rural development, or governance,
- ICTs and minority groups
- ICTs for cultural expression
- ICTs facilitating cultural understanding
- Community/society-based research that addresses ICTs and;
  - community organisation
  - leadership
  - relationships across divides
  - motivating development
  - capacities for nurturing harmony
  - confidence-building with minorities
  - engendering/sharing development experience

Indicative deadlines

- Deadline for Abstract submission (Not mandatory): July 15, 2017
- Notification of Abstract Acceptance decision: July 31, 2017
- Deadline for Full Paper submission: January 31, 2018
- Notification of acceptance decision: April 30, 2018
- Deadline for revised submission: August 27, 2018
- Notification of final acceptance decision: September 31, 2018
- Tentative publication date: December 15, 2018

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Paper Submission Instructions and review process

Researchers and practitioners are invited to submit original papers using the journal submission and reviewing web site https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/itd . Detailed submission guidelines can be found at: http://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?journalCode=titd&page=instructions .

Submitted papers should follow the instructions for authors and indicate "*ICTs for promoting sustainable information society and harmon*y" special issue when uploading their papers. Submissions to the special issue should be full research papers (maximum 21 pages or 9000 words) or practice papers (approximately 4000 words). Each submitted paper will be peer-reviewed in the same manner as other submissions to the Journal of IT for Development. Relevance, quality and originality of the contribution are the major acceptance criteria for each submission.

After initial screening, papers are reviewed by selected members of the editorial board and peers from an international pool for quality, consistency and research contribution. Authors are welcome to nominate one of the special issue editors or preferred reviewers when submitting their paper where no conflict of interest exist (an existing business or professional partnership, past or present association as thesis advisor or thesis student, and/or collaboration on a project or on a book/article/report/paper or co-editing of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings constitutes a conflict of interest). Papers submitted to this journal must contain original results and must not be submitted elsewhere while being evaluated. If duplication is found, papers are subject to being rejected for that reason alone.

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