The urgency of technology function against social empathy in the digital age

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ABSTRACT: Individuals in the digital age have the opportunity to change their physical and social environments according to their needs. Empathy is a mental activity that can affect the physical and social environment. Based on data in the field, there has been a shift in the role of social functions into technological functions in various life activities. Restoring the function of technology is an urgency to maintain individual social empathy in the digital era. This paper aims to provide an overview of the urgency of the function of technology for social empathy in the digital age. This study uses a descriptive approach with literature study methods. Sources of research data are books, journals, and research articles. The data analysis technique used content analysis. The results showed that the function of technology has a reciprocal contribution to social empathy

Keywords: technology, social empathy, digital age

1 INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has initiated the advancement of human civilization in the 21st century. The emergence of cutting-edge technological devices with the support of advanced features encourages technological development to be more advanced than before the 21st century. Several forms of technological progress can be seen from the aspects of function and form. Technology in terms of function can be interpreted as all kinds of uses that are owned by a technology device. For example, health measurement devices, educational media devices, security systems and so on, while technology in terms of form aspects can be categorized into small or large forms. For example, mobile devices with computers, memory card devices with hard drives, and so on. According to research data, technological developments have reached a higher level than before. The increase in users of digital technology devices shows that the need for technology functions has influenced social functions that run in daily activities (Kurniawan, 2020). The routines that run in the 21st century now seem to almost use the function of technology in all sectors of life, from the health, education, trade, and other life-driving sectors that work together to carry out social functions in life.

Reality like this finally encourages everyone to interact via the internet network. The interactions that occur form new patterns of communication that are able to influence the cultural and value systems of the community at large. Value systems and culture that develop in society provide space for the formation of empathy in the middle of social life. Empathy is concerned based on sympathy for others (Setyaningrum, 2019). Empathy will occur when someone pays attention to the person

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they meet and wants help to solve or face a problem. The attitude of empathy has an important role in maintaining the balance of values and cultures that develop in society. Another function possessed by an empathic attitude is to encourage someone to care and help (Darman & Howick, 2019) and to drive a meaningful social life emotionally in various situations and conditions of changing civilization (Noten et al. 2019). Empathy is an urgent need of society in the digital era. The use of various digital devices is carried out by almost every age level. According to research data shows that 43% of early adolescents have been in the category of internet addiction (Sari et al. 2017). Other data shows that in a time duration of 1-180 minutes 57.50% of people use the internet during the week and 51.10% on weekends (Kang, 2019). The internet as a product of the digital age is the dominating technology adopted in human civilization.

Realizing the conditions described in the paragraph above, researchers are interested in conducting research on the urgency of the function of technology for social empathy in the digital era. Researchers become research instruments, meaning that data collection and data processing are carried out by the researchers themselves in this study. This study aims to provide an overview of. the urgency of the function of technology to social empathy in the digital era. Through the study of this research, it is expected to be able to add insight to readers regarding the relevance of technology’s function to social empathy in the digital era.

2 METHODS

The writing method used in this paper is literature study. Literature study is a method that helps writers find answers about the purpose of writing based on reading results. Researchers in library research are expected to be able to search, find, and manage information sources that can be used as research data. The source of reading becomes the data used by the author to produce an answer or a solution. The selection of data sources or reading is determined by the criteria for publication of the last 10 years and not more than 10 years and above, except for primary or master reading sources. The steps taken for the literature study are presented at table 1.

Table 1. Literature review steps

Steps	Description
Topic Determination	The author chooses a writing focus that can be obtained based on observations, writing objectives and the author’s personal experience.
Collecting Data	The author searches data sources to obtain data that supports the purpose of writing. Sources of data can be found online, namely by accessing relevant scientific sites, and offline, namely by collecting books or reading material that have contributed to writing. The data source is then classified and analyzed according to the required part of writing.
Data Review	The data that has been collected and analyzed is then reviewed to produce information that supports writing. The data review follows the format of the purpose, function and usefulness of the writing that will be produced. This data review will later be outlined in the writing.
Writing a Data Review	The data from the study results are then written down in standard into the intended writing format.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social empathy is a mental response that is oriented towards focusing attention to feel the same situation and condition as the target of empathy in the social environment. empathy itself can be

interpreted as an important basic attitude that a person has in carrying out life activities as a social being (Tristy, 2017). Social life that continues to change along with the development of information technology is finally enough to provide challenges and opportunities for someone to maintain an attitude of social empathy in order to remain within the norms of values and norms that apply in a cultural system in the social society of the digital era.

The digital era offers many conveniences through sophisticated applications and information technology tools for the public. The digital era is marked by the increasing use of technological devices in various life activities. The use of technology is carried out by the community, such as communicating through social media, buying and selling transactions with the e-money application, internet-assisted learning and learning processes and many other activities that have implemented the function of technology in social life. The function of such technology needs special attention so that it provides greater benefits than the disadvantages and negative impacts that may arise.

The digital age brings many influences in every aspect of life. Empathy is a part of mental activity that takes place during life in various situations. Empathy in technological life in the digital era is important to be a concern for society so that the function of technology does not reduce the role of social functions that form mental activity, one of which is empathy. Some forms of domination of the function of technology in the social function space are dominance in routine interactions with people in the social environment (Mancil et al. 2016) harmonious relationships among communities (Luo et al, 2016), and relationships of mutual help and need among individuals in the social environment (Gellerstedt et al. 2020). The relationship between empathy and technology can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. The relationship between social empathy and technology in the digital age

Social Empathy	Technology
Social empathy drives one's behavior in carrying out an activity	Technology facilitates a person's behavior to drive physical and psychological activities.
Social empathy is a form of personal response to events that occur in the social environment.	Technology provides information about an event or situation. Its function is to provide alternative choices so that someone is more focused according to data information support.
Social Empathy	Technology

According to research data, 97.2% of students receive a significant direct impact on the empathy attitude of using technology in the digital era (Bukhori, 2020). The results of this study illustrate that individuals with higher educational backgrounds also have a risk of being affected by the function of technology on their social functions. worse conditions will certainly be experienced by individuals with lower educational backgrounds. The impact of such an uncontrolled function of technology can actually be anticipated through various strategic efforts. The goal is that social functions can exist and be able to run side by side with technological functions.

Subsequent research shows that 71.8% of people experience the influence of the use of technology on empathy in their social life (Putri, 2019). The effect experienced by society is certainly different from that experienced by students as in the previous paragraph elaboration. Although they have the same core problem, namely regarding the impact of the function of technology on empathy, society is felt to receive a greater impact in this case.

The influence of the function of technology in people's lives can lead to meaningful conflicts. Meaningful conflict can be interpreted as a condition of inner conflict or occurs within the individual and produces a response in the form of an attitude to oppose reality with the mental dimension that is being felt. Communities with various cultural backgrounds and values certainly have the potential to receive influence due to the dominance of the function of technology, so that cooperation between elements of society is needed in maintaining social functions in the function of technology so that it runs dynamically.

Some forms of the influence of information technology with empathy can be shown in the following table.

Table 3. The influence of technology on social empathy

Social Empathy	Technology
Direct Influence	The immediate effect will generally be for a short time. Several forms of technology's direct influence on social empathy are influencing communication styles, ways of thinking and social emotions.
Indirect Influence	The indirect effect lasts quite a long time because the impact will only be felt in the future. Some forms of indirect effect of technology on social empathy are triggering prosocial appearances in daily activities and triggering physical and verbal aggression.
Direct Influence	The immediate effect will generally be for a short time. Several forms of technology's direct influence on social empathy are influencing communication styles, ways of thinking and social emotions.

Seeing the condition of this terrible influence, efforts to restore the function of technology in maintaining social empathy is important so that people are able to avoid other adverse impacts that can be caused. This effort can be done with various alternative steps that are able to accommodate these conditions. Cooperation of various parties is required in realizing this effort in order to achieve optimal results. One of the ways to collaborate is with parties who have the authority in technology system operations such as communication and information technology and telecommunications provider companies, as well as cooperation between technology users, namely people with various backgrounds of technology needs.

Many alternative forms of effort can be made to restore the function of technology so that it does not dominate social functions, including maintaining social empathy in order to exist are through three business alternatives. The first business step is to return to the original purpose of using the technology itself. As we all know, the purpose of using technology actually serves to facilitate the fulfillment of human needs in a broad and global social environment, including in the digital era. However, this orientation experiences a shift and tends to lead to the fulfillment of personal satisfaction. So that this condition will directly or indirectly affect a person's social empathy attitude. Returning destinations can be initiated by putting instructions for use and reinforcing the rules for how to use in accordance with the regulations. In addition, manufacturers and suppliers of technology facilities can also impose sanctions on potential users of the technology devices they produce so that they can be used according to their functions.

The second business step is to provide education about the actual function of a technology device to users. This business looks simply and will be easy to ignore, because almost all users already know the functions of the technology devices they are currently using. However, to maintain a balance of understanding, it is necessary to periodically educate the users. Forms of educational activities that can be carried out are holding seminars, workshops, talk shows, and activities in the form of mass public delivery. This effort will run optimally if there is cooperation with various supporting parties, so that educational targets are appropriate and effectively accepted. The final alternative as the third step is to emphasize understanding to users about the benefits they will receive when using a technology device wisely and appropriately. One of them is to maintain their social empathy in various situations and conditions of change, including changes in the digital era. In addition to benefits, technology owners or producers can also provide losses that can be caused if potential users use technology for interests that have the potential to affect the functioning of their social functions.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Technological developments in the digital era have an influence on social empathy. The increase in the number of technology users encourages changes in social functions to become technological functions and ultimately affects mental conditions in social life. Empathy is a part of mental activity that appears in the form of attitudes that can be observed by the social environment. Empathy and information technology are two different sides but have a mutually influencing relationship with one another. The empathy that emerges is able to maintain technological developments according to social needs and challenges, while the presence of technology is able to direct social empathy towards progress or vice versa. Based on the research results, it shows that the function of technology actually has a strategic role in shaping life. Easy access to activities in meeting physical and psychological needs, placing technology into an inseparable part of life in every community routine in the digital era. However, the dominance of the function of technology ultimately affects the functioning of the social functions that each individual has in society. One of the social functions that runs in the community is social empathy. This research has finally succeeded in providing an idea that social empathy is important to maintain in digital situations, namely situations where the function of technology is able to become dominant over social functions.

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