

Chapter 16

Information as a Global Public Good and the Role of Modern Educational Technologies in the Creation of the Information Society

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ABSTRACT

Becoming the “basic production and power factor” in the 21st century, information confronts us in a very important form as a Global Public Good (GPG). It is the basis of the “information society” that is regarded as the advanced social form of the present time. Important roles fall to education in the production, access, and use of the information that transforms societies into an economic and social development stage. Education needs to reconstruct itself in accordance with the conditions of the information society through adapting itself to technological and scientific changes in order to fulfill the functions it undertakes. Addressing the topic from a theoretical perspective, this chapter aims at determining the place and importance of education for the creation of information as a global public good and the information society on the basis of the educational paradigm of the information society, and educational technologies to make it possible.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and information age have changed traditional perceptions in the science of finance, as in many disciplines. Some public goods that have been traditionally associated with indivis-

ibility of benefit and lack of competition in their consumption need a wider definition currently. This is because globalization and developments in information technologies have eliminated national boundaries, and introduced the concept of global public good whose benefits and thus financing

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are global and intergenerational. It is not possible to restrict the financing of goods whose benefits cannot be limited to a single country to just one country or a couple of countries. Thus, these goods are not produced by only one country or a couple of countries, but by international organizations that have a wider sphere of influence. The definition of global public goods covers not only the generation of global solutions to such global risks as environmental pollution, wars, epidemic illnesses, economic crises, and poverty, but also world heritage, governance, and information that may contribute to world welfare through international cooperation and coordination.

It is almost impossible to keep information, which is one of the above-mentioned global public goods, within national boundaries or to exclude it from its benefits when today's technologies are considered. Surely, in comparison to the past, it is now easier for the produced information to spread and be accessible for numerous people. However, it is a fact that differences between developed countries' and developing countries' levels of reaching the information and using it increase the gap between the levels of development more. Being one of the international organizations operating in the field of information, the World Bank emphasizes that differences between the levels of development of societies cause them to enjoy the global public goods that are provided in the same amount at different levels. Therefore, the importance of accepting information as the basic production and power factor and thus being an information society under the leadership of international organizations has increased gradually. This process has witnessed the determination of such various targets as developing a common vision and understanding for the information society, adopting an action plan and a declaration of principles to be implemented by governments,

international organizations, private sector, and civil society, and taking firm steps for the establishment of necessary organizations to accomplish the objective of information society for all.

One of the most important outputs of the policies developed by international organizations in regard to the use of information and communication technologies is that countries have quality education facilities. This is because the information age leads to the development of new educational technologies that make learning possible for everybody. Among these innovations are reforming the system, using modern educational tools that allow information transfer over the internet, and rearranging teaching and learning processes. In developed and developing countries, adaptation to the information society depends on the reforms in educational processes.

In consideration of the foregoing, the present study aims at revealing the relationship between information, information society, and education, and demonstrating the role of education peculiar to the information society (i.e. educational technologies) in the creation of information as a global public good and the information society. Thus, *firstly* the relationship between the information society and information is handled. *Secondly*, information confronting us as the basic production and power factor and having an important place in the creation of the information society is analyzed as a global public good, thereby demonstrating its basic characteristics. *Finally*, an attempt is made to explain the role of educational technologies in achieving the standards of the information society by revealing what kind of contributions educational technologies can make to the production, use, spread, and development of information as a global public good.

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