

Network society: A social evolution powered by youth

By Hebatullah S. El Gamal

Sixth of October University for Modern Sciences and Arts, Cairo

Since the rise of the term “network society” other expressions such as digital divide and digital inclusion have been re-visited. The attention is now directed towards studying the social implications of the connected world. The active participation in the network society moves societies to inclusive ones, albeit virtual ones. Marginalized societal segments as such as the aged, disabled and poor have enormous opportunities to overcome their challenges by joining the network society. Youth, especially in developing countries, who are considered “postponed capacities” represent a segment of the population that new information technologies (NITs) helped overcome their alienation and suppression as immature members of the society. This essay scans the debate taking place between the advantages and disadvantages of NITs. It also provides faces of digital cohesion leading to social inclusion across the world. Lastly, the essay shares the case of Egypt through an account of some of the attempts carried out by youth to benefit from the network society. The provided examples throughout this essay varied from social to business activities.

Key words: Network society, digital inclusion, digital divide, network paradox, online marketplace for youth.