

# Integrating Technology into The Social Work Education: Preparing Students for Digital Development

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**Abstract:** The development of technology and the entry of the revolutionary era of society 5.0 is a challenge for social life. Current challenges need to be solved with technological innovation. In the current conditions, we need to provide knowledge related to skills in using technology both operating tools and developing devices. The impact of this era is the rapid development of technology in all sectors including the social work assistance process. This research leverages technological know-how in the development and application of more efficient and effective social work helping processes. The importance of preparing superior social workers in the digital era, it is necessary to integrate and develop technology in the social worker education process. Social workers must have good digital skills to face the current era. By using a literature study, this study aims to examine opportunities for social work interventions based on the demands of community needs 5.0. This study uses a qualitative approach by offering an overview of various social worker education reviews that are integrated with technological developments. The research method used is literature study by identifying various literatures. The selected literature is adapted to the topic of study, the code of ethics of social workers and knowledge of technology. Data analysis is sourced from relevant secondary data related to the development of digital technology and social worker education studies. This case study provides an overview for educators in social work education so they can play a bigger role in today's technology-supported intervention development efforts. In addition, this study focuses on the development of social worker services in the technological era. In responding to the challenges of the current era, this study is relevant to be read by academics and social workers. The development of important technological engineering in the world of education and the development of social work interventions. In the education of social workers it is necessary to pay attention starting from the stages of engagement, assessment, planning, implementation of interventions, monitoring, evaluation and termination with the integration of today's technology. This is done to make it more effective, initiative and professional in recommending service programs.

**Keywords:** Social Work Education, Technology, Intervention

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## Introduction

Our daily routines have been significantly impacted by the evolution of technology. Social interactions, communication, education, consumer behaviors, and even entertainments have all been impacted by technology. All jobs should require technological abilities because they are necessary for success in today's society. Information and communication technology (ICT) is altering social work and is crucial in this field since it may supplement face-to-face professional practice. In reality, technology is changing the nature and

methods used in every job (Berzin, 2015; Santoso, 2018)..

Current technological developments are characterized by everything about the internet and technology that has artificial intelligence (AI). Our daily activities increasingly integrate AI, particularly in the fields of business, advertising, and social media (Boddy & Dominelli, 2017). Additionally, AI is starting to show up in social, health, and educational sectors (Mugisha, 2018). We define artificial intelligence (AI) in this work as computers that perform cognitive tasks, typically associated with human minds. It has

been found that bachelor's degree holders in social work in Indonesia most frequently choose these social work specialties for their future careers: policy and research; private practice with therapy and clinical social worker.

Social work as a profession that provides assistance to individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and society, also cannot avoid digitalization in some of the assistance processes it carries out. The emergence of e-therapy, e-supervision, e-counseling, e-record and e-report practices are examples of online-based social work practices (Raya, 2018; Mugisha, 2018; Vavrova, 2019).

The change in key roles in social work communications is largely due to constant and consistent advances in social media. Social work students need appropriate training to learn the skills to use technology effectively to become culturally competent with today's clients and to meet technology practices according to standards formulated by social work professional organizations. Human service organizations are also beginning to adopt social media and social work educators need to understand how to prepare social work students with the skills necessary for effective social media practice.

In response to various changes occurring in social work practice, several universities providing social welfare/social work study programs have included technology in their curriculum. Technology-related courses are only available in the Social Welfare study program at Wijaya Kusuma University, Indonesia and the social applied master's program at the Politeknik Kesejahteraan Sosial Bandung, Indonesia (Sugeng, 2022). The two examples above show that social work education in Indonesia is starting to realize the importance of digital literacy for the purposes of social work education and practice. However, in reality, of the various universities, there are only 2 that apply technology courses.

Social work, The digital trans forms occurring across society have an extensive and complicated impact on its fields of activity, institutions, professionals, and clientele. These include digitalization, which is the process by which digital communications and platforms restructure

and redefine processes, practices, and social worlds. Digitalization goes beyond digitisation, which is the conversion of traditionally analog processes or artifacts into digital ones. Digitalization creates many new opportunities throughout all areas of social work practice, but it also brings with it new issues.

The discussion of the phenomenon of digitalization in social work should objectively highlight both the potentials it offers and the harmful developments it has brought about. It is important to challenge widespread beliefs about technological determinism and technology rejection. Due to this, it is still crucial to create concepts and terminology that encourage critical thinking about digitalization, especially in the context of social work.

To answer the various challenges in the era of AI technology requires serious, planned and strategic efforts involving all relevant parties. Technological developments will ultimately change the perspective, behavior, nature and characteristics of social service patterns by adopting changes in technology itself. When information and communication technology is used effectively it can improve various methods of social work practice.

## **Materials and Methods**

This type of research is library research using secondary data sourced from literature relevant to digital literacy in social work education. Literature studies were carried out on various social change literature, literature in the field of social work practice and various literature related to the development of challenges and opportunities in conducting a study (review), and the results of the study are then presented in the form of a presentation. To enrich the presentation of study results.

Social work education that uses technology to design and deliver online-based social services must develop ethical competencies in a way that is appropriate for the service context. The curriculum in social work education must pay attention to 1) developing competence in the professional use of

technology, 2) good practices for utilizing technology in practice, 3) teaching basic digital literacy skills, 4) helping to understand norms, values and culture with the use of technology, 5) have competence in social service technology management systems.

Transformative social transformation will be achieved by incorporating technology into social work and developing innovative practice. concentrating particularly on the problems we face in the digital age. Given the pressing need for practical advice that encourages the growth of digital literacy in social work. The stages of intervention that are advised for inclusion in the curriculum for higher education are as follows.

### Results and Discussion

Social work educational institutions are trusted as institutions that can create and answer every challenge and opportunity offered. In this case, the world of education needs to pay attention to social engineering in social work practices amidst changes in AI technology. The following are several things that need to be included in the social work education curriculum. The following is an explanation based on the stages of social work. starting from engagement, assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation.

Engagement with clients is both a process and an outcome from intervention (Parker, 2020). It requires the effectiveness and use of helping skills in the digital era. one of which is the use of email. E-mail, when used as an adjunct to traditional meetings with clients, offers distinct advantages and risks. Benefits include the potential to reach clients in geographically remote and underserved communities, enhancing and extending relationships. Risks include threats to client confidentiality and privacy, liability coverage for practitioners, licensing, and the lack of competency standards for delivering email interventions (Taylor, 2020).

Assessment will be obtained from the client by video call. This led to feelings of anxiety that they were unable to make accurate or reliable assessments of families and their homes without a

home visit, and to feelings of distrust of service users when they were unable to view the wider context of who was in the home, or feel and sense what it was like to live in, on a video call. Centered on explicit and planned technological interventions in human service contexts and more interested in the interplay between technology and human behavior (Chan & Holosko, 2018). Intervention planning is carried out by meeting online via video call with the client. This can be done to avoid risks and client crises.

In the area of digital exclusion there arises room for social work, for its interventions where there are imbalances between expectations and environmental requirements and people's ability to meet these expectations. point out, digital exclusion cannot be separated from more general patterns of social exclusion, as they reinforce each other (Lopez, 2020). In intervention activities carried out in social work practice, attention needs to be paid to mastering technology. There is much to be learned in the use of technology and social work interventions. Intervention with clients can be assisted by various media, including the internet, AI and more sophisticated technology (Lopez, 2018).

The first tool that can be used in interventions for people with disabilities is an application. Applications can help deaf people to translate. The voice assistant application is easy to use and easy to download. So this application can help social workers in intervention. These applications include SIBI, Live Transcribe and Sibiku. Students need to learn several applications to support intervention activities with clients (Van Holstein, 2021; Goggin, 2021).

At a macro level, we can use big data to see current conditions by policy makers, observe community identity, and space for dialogue with the community. This big data can be processed to determine regional policy. Another contribution to the development of information and communication technology is fundraising through platforms. In practice, all crowdfunding activities are carried out on the internet. In social service practice in primary settings such as orphanages, several social media such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest have also been developed.

Social media is used to engage with internet users but social learning utilizes the power for education.

To develop competencies required through training and education (Santoso, 2020). Training for group interventions can also be conducted through online meetings. This study published the effectiveness of an online version and a classroom version of a widely used training program, showing that the online training was more effective than the live training (Chan & Holosko, 2018). This shows that training can be done through online meetings.

Social workers are expected to maintain documentation that ensures continuity and quality of services and that helps to establish accountability of services rendered. Such practice decisions include assessing when it is appropriate to include emails or text messages in the client record. The use of email helps social workers carry out activities more efficiently and effectively.

### **Challenge**

Context and safety factors must be addressed, and it is essential to include crisis management and risk assessment in social work curricula and field placements (Wu, 2021). Issues to consider comprise reconnecting or locating clients if technology fails during a crisis. Ethical clarifications regarding the future use of data must therefore take into account both positive and problematic effects. Such ethical and theoretical considerations should not, however, remain as an abstract critique of current digitalisation and social work practice. These considerations need to be converted into practical actions that can bring a distinct theoretical and ethical social work approach to digitalisation, whilst responding to existing economic, social and institutional contexts (Mishina, 2021).

Boundaries, comprising questions on informal ICT interactions with clients outside of work hours, online searches, and client "friend requests" through social media. Clients should be comprehensively informed about the purposes and methods of use of their data. Protecting the data of clients is a top priority. Private client data should only be transferred and stored on secure platforms. The focus should not just be on theoretical and

ethical concerns, but also on abilities for using specific software tools. A critical discussion on digital technology use in social work scenarios is also necessary. social media's ethical repercussions, including those related to concerns of data protection, privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, boundaries, anonymity, conflict of interest, and evidence-based practice (Ashok, 2022).

Ethics rules underscore the need for social workers to exercise caution when sharing information online since the information that clients access online is public. There is a significant lack of applied ethical thinking that can be used to address the fundamental ethical questions that arise as digital systems are introduced to society and social work, despite the fact that various social work organizations have developed ethical principles relating to digital technologies, such as the 'Code of Ethics' of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). In her research of digital systems that bar those living in poverty and persons with disabilities from receiving social benefits, she comes to the conclusion that our ethical evolution still lags behind our technological revolutions (Skiliar, 2021; Dogan 2022).

Seniors frequently make up the technologically excluded category, but it also includes parents of children, so generational transmission is possible (Reis, 2021). Identifying individuals or groups of persons who are digitally excluded or digitally illiterate; Implementing digital education in socially relevant educational courses are six strategies that should lead to social inclusion. Most of these actions should include social service providers, such as through information campaigns directed at the digitally excluded, analysis of the digitally excluded, or assistance with the establishment of digital centers in areas at risk of social exclusion.

### **Conclusions**

Social work educational institutions play a crucial role in addressing challenges and opportunities in the digital era. Engaging with clients requires effective digital skills, such as email, video calls, and AI. Big data and social media platforms can

help determine regional policy and community identity. Training and education can develop competencies required for group interventions, and social workers must maintain documentation to ensure continuity and quality of services. Social work curricula and field placements should incorporate crisis management and risk assessment, considering both positive and problematic effects of digitalization. Ethical considerations should be converted into practical actions, addressing boundaries, data protection, privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and conflict of interest. Social workers should exercise caution when sharing information online, and identify individuals or groups who are digitally excluded or illiterate. Implementing digital education and establishing digital centers can lead to social inclusion. The social work curriculum in Indonesia needs to provide information related to technological developments. This is important to support social work intervention activities in the future.

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