Digital citizenship in a Global Economy

Global economy is becoming more and more a digital economy. The emergence of a digital economy has necessitated the awareness of the idea of Digital citizenship. Understanding the concept of Digital citizenship is particularly important for dealing with the challenges and issues of working in a global economy. The term Digital citizenship is well explained in the website of Digital Citizenship.net by its author Mike Ribble. This paper is a reflection of four of the 'nine themes of Digital citizenship' as identified by the author.

The website defines Digital citizenship as "the norms of appropriate, responsible behavior with regard to technology use". (Ribble, M., 2013). The nine themes of Digital citizenship as identified by the author is Digital access, Digital commerce, Digital communication, Digital literacy, Digital law, Digital etiquette, Digital rights & responsibilities, Digital health & wellness and Digital security. For the purpose of the paper the four elements Digital access, Digital literacy, Digital law and Digital security are chosen. These four themes of Digital citizenship are particularly important in understanding the competitiveness and collaboration of a global economy.

The theme Digital Access refers to the complete electronic participation in society. When working as part of a digital economy, all technology users should be aware of the fact that opportunities for digital access can vary for different entities. Supporting digital access is crucial for ensuring equal digital rights. Collaboration and competitiveness are the basic factors for a developing digital economy. Collaboration cannot be effectual if there are challenges in digital access. Similarly competitiveness can result in better outcomes if the limitations for digital access are properly identified and rectified. Development of the digital economy is possible only

when the technology tools are increasingly used in the society. Digital citizens should be committed to supply additional resources to those who are either excluded from digital access or have limited digital access.

Digital Literacy is another important theme of the nine elements of Digital citizenship. It is all about teaching and learning technology and its uses. Digital literacy is an important theme of Digital citizenship because it has a significant role to play when it comes to working in a global economy. Educational institutions are in the forefront of technology infusion but there are much more to learn and teach when considering the global workplaces. For example technologies such as videoconferencing or online sharing practices are obligatory for workplaces though they are not taught in schools.   For fostering collaboration and maintaining competitiveness, workers of a global economy require immediate information. Information literacy thus becomes a very important component of a good Digital citizenship.

Digital Law is another important theme of the concept of Digital citizenship. It involves electronic responsibility for actions and deeds. Mostly it deals with the ethics of technology use in a society. Technology theft and technology related crimes are identified in societies as unethical practices in electronic use. On the other hand, all practices that are abided by the laws are identified as ethical practices in technology use. Just like being good citizens in an ethical society, ethical technology use is obligatory for a good Digital citizenship. Digital laws apply to any one who works online from anywhere at any time. Stealing other people's identity, damaging other one's work, hacking into others information, illegal downloading, plagiarizing, creation and dispersion of destructives worms, viruses or Trojans are examples of unethical use of technology which are restricted by the Digital laws. Collaboration, competitiveness and the

effectiveness of a digital economy greatly depend on the sufficient execution of digital laws among the digital citizens.

Digital Security or self-protection is a very important element of digital citizenship. Digital security is a matter of concern for anyone who works online. All components of the global economy give sufficient importance for ensuring Digital security. Individuals who work in areas such as Finance, Healthcare, National Defense, Research and Media have greater concerns with regard to Digital security because of the nature of their occupations. All the above said sectors are vital components for a developing global economy also. Hence, Digital security is a very important component of Digital citizenship for promoting competitiveness and collaboration of an emerging digital economy. All the nine elements identified in the article by the author are very important elements of good digital citizenship. However, the four themes Digital Access, Digital Literacy, Digital Law and Digital Security are crucially important for anyone who works online as part of the global economy.

Reference

Ribble, M (2013) Nine Themes of Digital Citizenship. In *Digital Citizenship.net*. Retrieved on September 15, 2013 from http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/Nine_Elements.html