DIGITAL CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL CITIZENSHIP IN PERU: A CONCEPTUAL CARTOGRAPHY

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Digital society
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ABSTRACT

The digital society is reconfiguring the relationships between digital culture and intercultural citizenship in Peru. To understand these connections, it is important to examine thesis reports presented in Peruvian universities. Conceptual mapping is used as a research method, allowing for the identification of emerging thematic connections. The results demonstrate a growing interest in research on digital culture and intercultural citizenship in Peru, as well as the interconnections and gaps that highlight national inequalities. Essentially, the need for public policies that promote digital culture, and an active and participatory intercultural citizenship online is revealed.

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1. Introduction

Globalization and the rapid scientific-technological development are causing accelerated changes in modern societies. In these societies, digital technology has become an integral part of identity and has a substantial impact on social organization. Consequently, the majority of actors (individuals, institutions, governments, etc.) are affected by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), representing "challenges and opportunities, as well as risks and potentially harmful effects when not introduced in a timely manner" (Espinel, 2022, p. 235). This has resulted in the formation of complex, pluralistic, and differentiated cultures and citizenships, generating multiple identities in daily interactions (Mondaca-Rojas et al., 2014). The impact of ICT is intensively manifested in habits, interests, and forms of citizen participation.

In the 21st century, ICT is causing significant changes in the socialization patterns of younger generations. These changes are giving rise to new conventions that not only alter the sense and production of knowledge, disrupting learning habits (Gros, 2015), but also transform the digital realm symbolically, with geolocatable spaces and time appropriations and inclusions (González-Patiño and Esteban-Guitar, 2021). These new singularities are giving rise to new identities, a symbiosis that transcends national boundaries in which ubiquity and personal environments are significant. According to Chan et al. (2021), this promotes immersion in intercultural contexts, where values and cultures are integrated.

Globalization and digitization are generating dynamics that pose a threat to civic coexistence and cultural integration. This is an unprecedented time for the proliferation and permeability of digital devices, as well as the processes and routines that promote cultural coexistence (Marín, 2013). Digital convergence is generating transitions characterized by the cross-cutting permeation of ICTs, posing challenges to interests and practices embedded in social reconfiguration, and introducing a new sociotechnical paradigm (Ariño and Llopis, 2020). In this context, feedback is generated while tensions arise as a result of the emergence of practices and discourses with distinct characteristics that require new forms and, consequently, updated instruments (Manzanares, 2020).

Social, political, and other factors that shape the digital society have resulted in cultural and civic transformations centered on digital spaces. These mediations are integrated into daily life based on the demands of the digital society (Guichot, 2012). ICTs have the potential to restructure social life processes, and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this trend by influencing technological mediation as a turning point (Ariño and Llopis, 2020). Social confinement has accelerated transitions in social organization, encouraging the digitization of supply and demand for services (Martí-Noguer, 2020). Specifically, according to Mondaca-Rojas et al. (2014), connectivity has made telework possible, provided access to a variety of public services, and promoted cultural exchanges and mobilizations.

The reorganization of the connections between intercultural citizenship and digital culture is a response to multiple daily interactions with subjects that mediate more intensely in politics, culture, education, commerce, entertainment, consumption, and other fields (Cáceres et al., 2020). Within the framework of these mediations, the potential for citizen participation runs at two levels: i) top-down, which is characteristic of conventional participation dynamics based on verticality, which inhibits real empowerment and negatively affects citizen involvement; and ii) bottom-up, which is an alternative and informal mode of participation that is more active and inclusive, supported by ICTs, but lacks a clear organizational structure and tends to occur in situations of vulnerability (Cáceres et al., 2015).

If modes of participation and relationships define intercultural citizenship, then techno-social mediations define digital culture. Mutual interactions modify intervention patterns, making access and comprehension of informational flows necessary (Martí-Noguer, 2020). The established connections involve changes in the conditions of production, distribution, and access to digital content (audiovisuals, streaming, etc.), marking temporal and spatial ruptures, as well as exchanges of deterritorialized products (Penteado et al., 2021). According to Nogueira de Oliveira and Fraga (2022), media production and reallocation facilitate remote access and the dismantling of cultural barriers, allowing greater openness to interculturality. According to Chan et al. (2021), these modifications foster ideals of responsibility and benefits.

In the highly technological ecosystem in which we live, intercultural citizenship and digital culture share ideas and practices about democracy, diversity, inclusion, and equality (Cáceres et al., 2020). The
digitization of society has introduced distinctive characteristics compared to the past. Currently, speed and intensity have expanded citizen and cultural spheres in a complementary way. They have been incorporated into public management through electronic administrations, which, despite improving relations with citizens (Del-Prete et al., 2013), generate problems of access and use of digital public services (Abad-Alcalá et al., 2017). Consequently, new virtual sociability spaces (Manzanera-Román and Haz-Gómez, 2022) have emerged for extended coexistence on the Internet.

As internet connectivity makes social exchanges more accessible, the digital society emphasizes participatory culture, moving from "small worlds" to limitless environments. The Internet increases the digital presence of citizens, which requires confronting and overcoming analog culture and traditional structures. According to Sastre et al. (2019), digital transformation involves not only culture and identity but also organizational functioning. In the digital society, culture and citizenship evoke theoretical concepts and foundations of immediacy, demanding analysis of risks and opportunities, as well as estimations of their convergences and difficulties. Therefore, citizen and cultural connections encompass understanding, involvement, and evolution of oneself and the community, as well as the development of new perspectives (Emejulu and McGregor, 2016).

The interrelations between digital culture and intercultural citizenship present conceptual similarities and differences. Addressing them requires the use of external theoretical perspectives that bring closer the multiple facets that mobilize them. Uncovering the concavities and boundaries involves accounting for topics that, while interconnected, little is known about their performances. The stated analysis seeks to identify the locations of knowledge, integrating the domains they represent and making visible the diffuse boundaries of an active, critical, and committed interaction that is not only resident but also promotes change (Kim and Choi, 2018). In these efforts, identities are constructed that, by definition, incorporate aspects of citizen empowerment in digital spaces (Curran and Ribble, 2017).

In the Latin American context, cultural integration of citizenship in the digital world is a topic that has yet to be thoroughly investigated. Although resources and means for its manifestation are emerging, little is known about its connections and projections (Turpo-Gebera et al., 2022). This public attention gap represents a challenge that must be addressed, by connecting shared development areas and revealing their trajectories and obstacles. From this perspective, it is proposed to analyze national research, particularly dissertations defended in Peruvian universities, in order to determine the integrations, common interests, and patterns between digital culture and intercultural citizenship. This will allow us to comprehend their contexts and challenges, in order to generate knowledge that guides future research. In conclusion, the study of the relationship between digital culture and intercultural citizenship in the Latin American context is an essential topic that requires additional attention and research to comprehend its implications and potentials.

2. Method

The research utilized conceptual mapping, which is recognized as a technique of qualitative document analysis that generates spatial representations. Based on specialized scientific literature, conceptual mapping permits an exhaustive overview of a phenomenon and the systematization of results on a topic (Vivas and Martos, 2010). Through the use of guiding questions for the search, analysis, and organization of knowledge (Bermeo et al., 2016), this method organizes the field of knowledge on the concept or concepts being analyzed and contributes to an understanding of their evolutions, characteristics, categories, differences, etc. (Tobón, 2012). The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of concepts in order to connect and create missing concepts.

The procedure entails an informative search based on the selection, ordering, and subsequent analysis of a collection of thesis reports. The decisions are intended to provide answers to the research questions (Table 1). The National Registry of Research Works (RENATI, https://renati.sunedu.gob.pe/) was utilized for the search and retrieval of scholarly research. In RENATI, one can locate theses defended in Peruvian universities (public and private) as well as theses defended in foreign universities and deposited for the purpose of degree recognition or homologation.
### Table 1. Axes of analysis of the conceptual mapping on digital culture and intercultural citizenship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axis of analysis</th>
<th>Central question</th>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evolution</td>
<td>How has intercultural citizenship and digital culture research evolved in Peru?</td>
<td>Historical development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterization</td>
<td>What are the sub-fields and fields of intercultural citizenship and digital culture research?</td>
<td>Current development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categorization</td>
<td>What categories do intercultural citizenship and digital culture fall under?</td>
<td>Investigative fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation</td>
<td>How do the concepts of intercultural citizenship and digital culture differ?</td>
<td>Sub-investigative fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Key categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Subsidiary categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Related concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Differentiating concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Created based on Tobón, 2012

The following criteria are used as search bases to retrieve information via the selection of documents (university theses):

### Table 2. Selection criteria for analysis documents (theses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Exclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document type</td>
<td>Graduate thesis (Master’s/PhD)</td>
<td>Undergraduate thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period/date</td>
<td>Determined by retrieved theses</td>
<td>There is no date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Open (full document)</td>
<td>Incomplete, restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titles/keywords</td>
<td>“Digital culture” and “intercultural citizenship”</td>
<td>Not relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search period</td>
<td>October-November 2022</td>
<td>After April 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Prepared by the authors

Once the primary information from RENATI has been retrieved in accordance to the established criteria (Table 2), its compliance is evaluated. After reading the abstracts (metadata) and the document selection sequence (Table 3), the study sample is established. For this procedure, successive searches are considered, starting with independent heuristic searches based on keywords and inclusion criteria to retrieve the theses (first search). Subsequently, considering the exclusion criteria, their relevance is determined based on their direct relationship to the research objectives (second search). Finally, based on the navigability between the parts and the entirety of the theses (hermeneutic analysis), pursuing the confluence of the concepts under study, the study reports are established (third search)

### Table 3. Sequence for determining the study sample (selected theses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>First Search</th>
<th>Second Search</th>
<th>Third Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Citizenship (IC)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Culture (CD)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After a thorough review of the thesis reports, the sample was composed of 19 postgraduate thesis reports (masters and doctorate) that address the Peruvian context. Of that total, one thesis on digital culture and seven theses on intercultural citizenship belong to foreign universities.

### 3. Results

The organization of the recovered data allows for an account of the emerging processes of the study constructs. The analysis of the extracted data contributes to the formulation of the interrelationships between intercultural citizenship and digital culture in Peru, based on an examination of theses defended in Peruvian universities.
3.1. Investigative development of intercultural citizenship and digital culture

Research on intercultural citizenship and digital culture in Peru began in 2018. Prior to that date, the university theses contained in RENATI corresponded to foreign deposits (8 theses or 42%), originating from Spain (6) and the United States (2).

**Figure 1.** Research evolution on intercultural citizenship and digital culture in Peru (2015-2022)

Figure 1 represents the evolution of research in the fields of digital culture and intercultural citizenship, highlighting differences in scientific production over time. The period of 2015-2016 marks the beginning of research on these constructs, followed by years with fluctuations in both the number of investigations and their approaches. It is important to note that the number of theses on digital culture exceeds those on intercultural citizenship in quantity.

On the other hand, Figure 2 shows that the majority of research on these constructs comes from foreign universities that use Peru as a study context, highlighting studies on intercultural citizenship. In addition, it is evident that studies on digital culture predominates in public universities, while in private universities there is a certain balance, with a slightly higher proportion of digital culture studies.

In addition to the previously mentioned factors, the disparity in scientific production can be attributed to the relative importance of each field in political and educational agendas, as well as to the research priorities of institutions. It is possible that digital culture has been given a higher priority on the country’s educational and political agenda, which is reflected in the greater amount of research in that field. However, intercultural citizenship is an increasingly relevant topic in a diverse and constantly changing global society, so it is essential to promote research in this field to develop effective strategies for inclusion and peaceful coexistence. In this sense, Peruvian universities can play a key role in promoting research in both fields and in training researchers committed to building a more just and equitable society.

3.2. Conceptual characterization of intercultural citizenship and digital culture

The study of the interactions between intercultural citizenship and digital culture allows for the identification and definition of the different aspects that connect them. By organizing information, relevant fields of knowledge are discovered, including academic and professional degrees, as well as subfields such as specializations and mentions that universities highlight as attributes of these areas of study. The related topics between the constructs indicate the need for collaborative approaches that consider the relationships between intercultural citizenship and digital culture, as they are closely related concepts. The linking concepts convey the complementarities of citizen coexistence, which are manifested extensively in digital society (Del Prete et al., 2013; Penteado et al., 2021).
The analysis of the interactions between intercultural citizenship and digital culture has revealed significant characteristics that indicate education and public administration are the most pertinent disciplines. Figure 3 illustrates the connections between these two constructs and how they interweave in these fields, while Figure 4 shows more specific investigative proximities in the subfields of education, management, and public policy. Essentially, the thematic convergence between the fields of study is visualized, which manifests itself in the subfields of investigation. These field and subfield configurations provide new opportunities for research that could contribute to the development of new areas of study by explicitly assuming their interrelationships.

Due to their shared characteristics, intercultural citizenship and digital culture are essential research topics in Peruvian universities. These concepts are interconnected and mutually supportive, requiring the identification of research on social inclusion and peaceful coexistence among diverse cultural groups in modern society. In order to create a more equitable and just global community, it is essential to comprehend and promote these ideas.

### 3.4. Conceptual categorization of intercultural citizenship and digital culture

In the conceptual interactions between intercultural citizenship and digital culture, there are preponderant terms that appear in both constructs. These terms disclose coincidences in their approach and define their thematic intersections through groupings or categories.
Analyzing the study's constructs reveals categories that reflect shared uses and related topics between digital culture and intercultural citizenship. These categories are essential for comprehending their convergence. In digital culture studies (Figure 5), defining categories such as Social Networks, Digital Technology, Digital Competence, and Globalization, among others, can be found. In Figure 6, categories such as Social Networks, Intercultural Competence, Digital Competence, and Globalization are observed, among others, in relation to intercultural citizenship.

The interrelationships reveal the necessity of addressing both constructs simultaneously through subsidiary categories enabling a more precise investigative strategy. Identifying these shared categories and their interdependence suggests the possibility of an interdisciplinary approach that enables a deeper understanding of these complex issues and their impact on today's society. In this way, new research areas that investigate these interrelationships and their implications for building a more just and equitable global community can be considered.

3.5. Conceptual differentiation of intercultural citizenship and digital culture

In the reviewed theses, studies related to digital culture and intercultural citizenship exhibit both similarities and substantial differences. Indeed, distinct categories that designate particularized "territories" are identified. These categories reflect concepts that are completely interrelated and facilitate the differentiation of research methodologies in each field.

Figure 7. Related and distinctive concepts on intercultural citizenship and digital culture in Peru

The interaction between digital culture and intercultural citizenship is depicted in Figure 7, which shows a series of interconnected categories. It is possible to distinguish distinct spaces that are related to one another, with the most important ideas occupying the largest spaces. These key concepts are: Virtual platform, Digital competence, Intercultural policy, Digital identity, and Organizational change. Each of these concepts is interconnected with the others and together they define the relationship between digital culture and intercultural citizenship.

In addition to the larger spaces, the figure depicts smaller spaces that designate specific areas of development and separate the areas of interaction. These are Collaborative Learning, Globalization, and the Rural Community. New research opportunities can be identified within these spaces in order to better comprehend the relationship between digital culture and intercultural citizenship.

In conclusion, Figure 7 depicts the categories that emerge from the interaction between digital culture and intercultural citizenship, highlighting the significance of key concepts and their
interrelationship, as well as specific areas of development that facilitate a deeper understanding of the interaction between these two constructs.

4. Discussion

The conceptual review of intercultural citizenship and digital culture theses defended in Peru enables us to comprehend the interrelationships between the two topics. Both areas of study share terms that connect them, but they also have their own distinctive characteristics. Digital culture and intercultural citizenship are emerging fields of study in a variety of disciplines, making their growing interest a unique moment of research expansion and openness that encourages their development (Marín, 2013). Moreover, the intensification of digitization policies in the country generates transitions that transcend traditional research interests, reconfiguring daily paradigms towards perspectives of digital society-related experiences (Ariño and Llopis, 2020).

In Peru, research on digital culture and intercultural citizenship is influenced by globalization and the rapid advancement of digitalization in the country. As a consequence, researchers are conducting studies that enable the formation of complex, pluralistic, and differentiated cultures and citizenships. It is crucial to note that the digital society is generating significant changes in the ways of addressing these issues in Peru, resulting in the emergence new conventions that alter the interpretation and production of knowledge. This, in turn, represents a symbolic transformation of the digital (Ariño and Llopis, 2020). These new singularities promote the exploration of new topics that transcend the boundaries of research and promote immersion in intercultural contexts, where values and cultures are related, integrated, and in constant evolution, opening up new avenues for study and investigation.

The themes of intercultural citizenship and digital culture are intrinsically linked, and their convergence generates transitions that pose a challenge to conventional research. This moment represents a unique opportunity for the expansion and permeability of digital devices and processes that promote cultural coexistence (Manzanares, 2020; Martí-Noguera, 2020). By focusing on these manifest thematic interactions, we can reorganize the links between intercultural citizenship and digital culture. In addition, the penetration of digital technology in Peruvian society increases the diversity of disciplines, assigning greater importance to fields such as education, politics, culture, commerce, entertainment, consumption, and other areas (Cáceres et al., 2020).

In the context of intercultural citizenship and digital culture research in Peru, it is essential to acknowledge that there are research gaps that must be addressed. One of these gaps relates to citizen participation, which occurs on two levels: top-down and bottom-up (Cáceres et al., 2015). The potential of citizen participation as an opportunity for research has not yet been fully explored. Moreover, there is a lack of research regarding the connections and conditions of production, distribution, and access to digital content, such as audiovisuals and streaming services (Penteado et al., 2021). This issue, if resolved, could contribute to an improvement in the content of online information. Lastly, there are research deficits regarding the challenge of cultural barriers that limit intercultural openness, requiring changes that foster citizen responsibility and benefits (Chan et al., 2021).

It is crucial to promote research strategies in Peru which capitalize on the connections between digital culture and intercultural citizenship. The country is in the process of developing digital ecosystems, which requires research methods that promote cultural integration in a globalized context. These approaches will facilitate addressing the inequalities in access to ICT and the digital divide that exist in the country, as well as making them visible through research in order to develop public policies that guarantee equal opportunities for all citizens in this area. To highlight the need for an inclusive digital culture and an active and participatory intercultural citizenship, which would improve citizen relations for better coexistence on the web, it is essential to conduct research on these concepts. It should be noted that these issues have been addressed previously (Abad-Alcalá et al., 2017; Manzana- Román and Haz-Gómez, 2022), but further investigation is required to generate pertinent knowledge.

The relationship between intercultural citizenship and digital culture has become a focus of research in Peruvian universities due to the significance of these issues in student education and the promotion of a more inclusive and equitable society. Therefore, studies and research are being conducted to comprehend how digital culture can be employed to promote intercultural citizenship and how effective strategies can be devised to achieve this objective.
In conclusion, the relationship between intercultural citizenship and digital culture is a topic of great importance in Peruvian universities, as it represents an opportunity to promote inclusion and diversity in today's society. Therefore, it is crucial to continue researching and investigating how these two fields can be combined to promote a more just and equitable society for all.
References


