



Applying Ho Chi Minh's thought on building the new socialist person to fostering revolutionary ethics among digital citizens in contemporary Vietnam

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Abstract

The article clarifies the meaning of the "new socialist person" in Ho Chi Minh's thought and applies it to fostering digital citizens in Vietnam in the context of today's digital transformation. The study employs document analysis and synthesis, and compares theoretical perspectives with practical realities. Ho Chi Minh affirmed that "morality is the root," emphasizing the standards of "diligence, thrift, integrity, righteousness, and impartiality for the common good," along with persistent self-cultivation and the long-term strategy of "cultivating people." Accordingly, the personality of the new person is summarized as comprising a moral value system, the capacity for action grounded in self-discipline, and a sense of social responsibility. On this basis, the article argues that fostering digital citizens is essential to achieving the goals of digital government, a digital economy, and a digital society, the key focuses are information and data literacy, digital safety, and lifelong learning. Current realities show that many forms of digital misconduct (fake news, verbal abuse, privacy violations, academic dishonesty, and profiteering) stem not only from a lack of technological skills but also from deficiencies in morality and digital culture. Therefore, it is necessary to orient digital citizenship education along the pathway of "values – competencies – digital behaviors" to form a humane, responsible digital character and enable effective participation in the digital society

Keywords: Ho Chi Minh thought, digital citizens, revolutionary ethics, the new socialist person.

Introduction

In the process of national construction and development, human beings have always been identified as the center, the subject, and the goal of all development strategies. In Ho Chi Minh's thought, building a "new socialist person" is a sustainable orientation, emphasizing comprehensive cultivation of morality, intellect, lifestyle and community responsibility, with education and the "human development" strategy play a key role.

Currently, digital transformation is shifting social life into cyberspace, creating a demand for the formation of digital citizens with new qualities and standards. The digital space opens many opportunities for people to access knowledge and participate in social life, but at the same time, it also gives rise to and spreads many deviant phenomena such as fake news, hate speech, personal attacks, invasion of privacy, and copyright infringement. This shows that the training of digital citizens cannot be limited to equipping them with technology skills, but must be based on values and ethical standards, linked to the ability to self-regulate behavior and a sense of responsibility towards the community.

However, most studies on digital citizenship in Vietnam have mainly focused on technical aspects, skills, and information management. The approach from the perspective of value systems and personality orientation, especially the application of Ho Chi Minh's thought on building a new person as a basis for guiding the training of digital citizens, has not yet been fully and systematically presented. Based on this reality, the article focuses on clarifying three issues: (1) the conceptual content of the new socialist person in Ho Chi Minh's thought; (2) ethical and cultural requirements in the process of forming digital citizens in Vietnam; and (3) proposed orientations for

training in "values - competencies - digital behavior" to contribute to the formation of a humane and socially responsible digital personality

Literature Review

1. Theoretical basis

1.1 The concept of "New Socialist Person" in Ho Chi Minh's thought

In Ho Chi Minh's thought, the "new socialist person" is a model of personality associated with revolutionary goals and the requirements of building a new life: a type of person who possesses both a revolutionary moral foundation and practical capabilities, knows how to place common interests above personal interests, and develops harmoniously between personal qualities and social responsibility. In that context, the new person being become the subject of the task of building a new society and the goal of development, because the quality of human beings determines the quality of the regime and the effectiveness of the construction process.

Ho Chi Minh placed morality as the foundational when defining the standards of a revolutionary person: "A revolutionary must have morality; without morality, no matter how talented, they cannot lead the people". This argument implies that ability (talent) can only be developed in the right direction when guided and restrained by morality (virtue). Therefore, the essence of the new person is a system of enduring moral values, which create "resistance" to the temptations of power, individualism, and deviations in social life.

In the structure of the new person's qualities, Ho Chi Minh emphasized "diligence, frugality, integrity, and righteousness" as the four "virtues" that shape the demeanor and lifestyle of a revolutionary. In particular, in his

Testament, he continued to affirm the requirement that each party member and cadre must truly embody revolutionary ethics, and must be diligent, frugal, honest, righteous, selfless, and impartial". This can be understood as a standard of public service ethics and social ethics: working diligently, living a clean life, acting fairly, and acting for the common good – key criteria for forming a "new" personality suitable for a society striving for justice, democracy, and civilization.

Ho Chi Minh considered the formation of moral character as not spontaneous but requiring long-term training, emphasizing self-discipline and perseverance in self-cultivation: "Revolutionary morality does not fall from the sky... it is forged through daily struggle and persistent training...". This shows that becoming a new socialist person requires a process in which each individual is both the object of education and the subject of self-improvement. The concept of "cultivating people" clearly reflects Ho Chi Minh's long-term vision for building a new type of person. President Ho Chi Minh once profoundly advised: "For the benefit of ten years, plant trees; for the benefit of a hundred years, cultivate people", indicates that building a new person must be placed within a sustainable strategy, considering education as the fundamental tool for forming a successor generation with ideals, knowledge, morality, and the ability to participate in social life.

In conclusion, the "new socialist person" in Ho Chi Minh's thought comprise three closely linked layers of meaning: Moral values (morality as the foundation; diligence, frugality, integrity, and righteousness; impartiality); the capacity for action and self-discipline (unifying words and deeds through training); and a sense of social responsibility and community orientation (serving the Fatherland and the people). These layers constitute a revolutionary and culturally grounded personality standard, providing a foundation for applying this thought to the cultivation of digital citizens in the context of contemporary digital transformation.

1.2 The necessity of fostering revolutionary ethics among digital citizens in the context of digital transformation in Vietnam

In Vietnam, digital transformation has been identified as a national strategic direction aimed at the simultaneous development of a digital government, digital economy, and digital society. The programs and objectives set forth not only focus on improving infrastructure or expanding online public services, but also emphasize the extent to which citizens are able and willing to participate in the digital environment in cyberspace, as reflected in expanded connectivity, increased use of smart devices, the promotion of electronic payments, and strengthened cybersecurity. This indicates that, in the current stage, citizens are no longer simply beneficiaries of technology but have become active participants and partners in the digital ecosystem, from using digital services to providing feedback. Therefore, fostering digital ethics is an inevitable requirement for developing digital competencies among citizens in cyberspace.

First, information and data literacy is fundamental for individuals to live and work effectively in a digital environment.. Citizens need to know how to search, filter, assess the reliability, use, and manage data for learning, work, and decision-making, thereby minimizing risks from

fake news and misinformation, which have become increasingly prevalent. Cultivating digital citizenship is also essential for developing communication, collaboration, and social participation capacities in cyberspace. As the digital environment expands, citizens need to know how to interact appropriately, respect differences, cooperate effectively, and participate responsibly in online communities, and understand identity management to protect their personal reputation and fulfill their social responsibilities in the process of interaction.

Another requirement is the capacity to create digital content in association with legal and ethical responsibility. In a context where users not only receive but also create and disseminate content, digital citizens need to be equipped with the ability to create, edit, and share content appropriately, while understanding and adhering to principles of copyright, citation, respect for authorship, and consideration of the consequences of violations of media rights on digital platforms.

In addition, digital safety and privacy protection play a pivotal role in ensuring well-being in a digital society. Citizens must be provided with knowledge and skills to protect personal data, prevent fraud, and ensure the security of their devices and accounts. Along with that is the ability to self-regulate behavior to limit risks and consequences that may arise in the online environment. Therefore, training digital citizens cannot stop at technical skills, but must be linked to risk management capabilities and a sense of responsibility of each digital citizen. Moreover, in response to the rapid changes in technology and working methods, digital citizens also need to develop problem-solving capacity. This is a comprehensive competency that encompasses critical thinking, problem-solving skills, the ability to learn new tools independently, and the ability to apply technology to solve practical problems in the ever-changing environment of the digital age.

In summary, in the context of digital transformation in Vietnam, fostering revolutionary ethics based on Ho Chi Minh's thought for digital citizens is not only an immediate requirement but also a strategic social task, contributing to enabling people become capable, responsible, and effective participants in the process of building a digital government, digital economy, and digital society.

1.3 The current issues concerning the revolutionary ethics among digital citizens in Vietnam

Digital transformation is profoundly changing how Vietnamese people communicate, learn, work, consume, and participate in social life online. In this context, the cultivation of digital citizens needs to place particular emphasis on ethics, including value systems, behavioral norms, respect for others, respect for the law, and a sense of responsibility toward the community in the digital space. Many emerging issues stem from ethical deficiencies or deviations in the use of technology, generating new social consequences and degrading the quality of digital culture.

Practical experience in managing information in cyberspace in 2024 shows that digital citizenship ethics in Vietnam are facing significant challenges, reflected in the large scale of handling infringing content. Specifically, by December 2024 ^[18], cross-border platforms had removed or blocked thousands of violating contents: Facebook removed 8,981 items (94%), YouTube removed 6,043 items (91%), and TikTok removed 971 items (93%). These figures reflect a

reality: a segment of users and content creators still participate in or spread harmful, false, and illegal information and statements; thereby eroding social trust, disrupting mental well-being, and negatively impacting the foundation of ethical values in the digital society. In other words, digital citizenship ethics have not yet been standardized into social responsibility and speech discipline commensurate with the widespread reach of social media.

Notably, the authorities also recorded that by the end of September 2024, they had received and processed 1,130 reports related to malicious, fraudulent, and false information. Through inspection, correction, and disciplinary activities, the prevalence of violations was also revealed the prevalence of violations, with 168 organizations or individuals inspected and rectified, and 58 cases sanctioned, totaling VND 555,939,000 in fines. This indicates that although social self-purification through reporting exists, the level of violations remains considerable, demonstrating limited capacity for self-regulation of behavior and speech norms among a segment of digital citizens. This reflects a situation in which ethics have not kept pace with the level of digital citizenship and the current digital environment. These figures show that standards of digital safety culture have not yet been concretized into regular habits and discipline, thus necessitating both moral education linked to ideals and civic responsibility, and the strengthening of self-protection capacities, emphasizing discipline, exemplary conduct, and responsibility toward the community as concrete manifestations of revolutionary ethics in the digital age.

The decline of behavioral norms in the online environment has emerged as a worrying social issue. With characteristics such as rapid dissemination, instantaneous interaction, and ease of emotional expression, digital space facilitates a segment of users expressing emotions through comments that may be either negative or positive. It should be emphasized that this is not simply about online communication skills, but reflects a person's moral capacity such as self-restraint, respect for human dignity, and consideration of the consequences before speaking or sharing.

Furthermore, the crisis of trust caused by fake news and misinformation necessitates the urgent integration of moral education with personal responsibility. Fake news, sensational content, and emotionally manipulative information often spread rapidly, potentially distorting social perceptions and intensifying community conflicts. In this context, digital citizenship ethics are demonstrated through respect for truth, adherence to verified information, and a conscious refusal to contribute to the dissemination of harmful content. Without an ethical foundation, digital competence can become a tool for division and distortion of truth.

Violations of privacy and personal data also constitute a prominent ethical and legal challenge. Actions such as posting images of others without permission, publicly disclosing personal information, sharing sensitive data, or using data without consent indicate that privacy has not yet been fully recognized as a value to be respected. Digital citizenship ethics, by contrast, require respect for personal rights, adherence to the principle of consent, awareness regarding the information to be shared, and responsibility for protecting both one's own data and that of others during interactions.

With the development of digital tools today, instances of fraud tend to increase. On a broader level, respect for copyright and intellectual property rights has also become a component of digital culture, because the unauthorized copying and exploitation of intellectual property not only violates regulations but also undermines creativity and integrity in the digital environment. Therefore, cultivating digital citizenship needs to be based on core values such as honesty, responsibility, and respect for intellectual property. Notably, the exploitation of cyberspace for personal gain and harm, such as online fraud, identity theft, investment scams, and psychological manipulation, is not only a cybersecurity issue but also a manifestation of moral decay among a segment of users. Therefore, cultivating digital citizenship ethics must act as a preventative barrier, helping to develop the capacity for self-regulation, resistance to temptations for personal gain, and respect for the law.

In summary, the current situation shows that cultivating digital citizenship in Vietnam needs to shift its focus from developing purely technical skills to strengthening ethical foundations. Without an ethical foundation, digital skills can be misused, increasing personal harm and eroding social trust. Conversely, when ethics are shaped and ethical standards and digital culture are properly established, digital competence truly becomes a driving force for a safe, humane, and sustainable digital society.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach combined with textual analysis to clarify the relationship between ethical values, digital competencies, and digital behaviors of citizens in the context of digital transformation in contemporary Vietnam, thereby examining the applicability of Ho Chi Minh's thought to fostering revolutionary ethics among digital citizens. This approach is appropriate because the research problem is both theoretical and closely linked to practical digital life.

The data sources comprise three groups: texts related to Ho Chi Minh and research on ethics and education; international academic frameworks and documents on digital citizenship and digital ethics; and practical data from public online communities in Vietnam discussing fake news, online behavior, privacy rights, and social responsibility.

Online data were systematized and synthesized using methods such as analysis, comparison, and selection of relevant information for the period from 2024 to 2025^[2]. At the same time, official reports and data from state management agencies were used as reference and verification sources, thereby enhancing the reliability and scientific value of the research findings. The combination of multiple data sources and methods allows for cross-verification and ensures a solid scientific basis for the conclusions and recommendations of the article.

Research results

Applying Ho Chi Minh's thought to the cultivation of digital citizens is a meaningful approach, as his thought centers on building human beings: "taking morality as the foundation," regarding education as the cause of "cultivating people," and emphasizing the unity between awareness and action, as well as between personal self-cultivation and community responsibility. On this basis, training content should be designed along the trajectory from value systems to digital

competencies and behavioral norms, with the aim of forming a "digital personality" that is knowledgeable, ethical, and socially responsible.

Applying Ho Chi Minh's thought to the training of digital citizens is a meaningful approach, because his ideas focus on building human character: "taking morality as the foundation," considering education as the undertaking of "cultivating people," and emphasizing the unity between awareness and action, between personal self-cultivation and community responsibility. Based on this, the training content should be designed along the lines of "from values to digital competencies and behavioral norms," aiming to form a "digital personality" that is knowledgeable, ethical, and socially responsible.

The orientation of digital values and ethics must be placed at the center, in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's view on the foundational role of morality in human development. The digital environment has characteristics that make ethics easily challenged. Therefore, cultivating digital citizens cannot simply involve teaching them how to use tools, but must establish a guiding value system that enables honesty, respect for others, humaneness, responsibility, discipline, and self-respect. Honesty is directly linked to respecting the truth, not distorting information, and not abetting fake news. Respect for human beings is demonstrated by not humiliating, attacking, or using verbal violence, and not exploiting the pain of others. Once a value system is established, it becomes a compass that helps individuals discern right from wrong, what should or shouldn't be done, and know when to stop before succumbing to the common temptations of the online world.

From a system of values, the training content needs to transform into a core group of competencies, namely ethics, so that digital citizens can act correctly in the digital environment. To achieve this, it is necessary to focus on the following issues:

Firstly, it's about information literacy, the ability to identify, evaluate, and use information responsibly. In the data age, raising public awareness is not just about knowing necessary information, but also about knowing how to choose sources, verify information, distinguish between logical arguments and fallacies, and protect oneself from media manipulation. Training should help learners develop the habit of asking: Where does this information come from? Is there evidence? Where can it be verified? What is the purpose of its dissemination? This represents a renewed approach to enhancing public awareness, consistent with Ho Chi Minh's spirit of learning to broaden intellect and combat superstition and ignorance, but situated within the context of digitized information and instantaneous dissemination.

Secondly, data security and privacy are essential ethical requirements for modern digital citizens. Many deviant online behaviors stem from disregard for privacy, such as posting others' images without permission, sharing personal information, or disseminating sensitive data for ridicule or harm. Essentially, these behaviors reflect a lack of respect for human beings in the new context. Accordingly, training should equip individuals with the capacity to manage digital identity, establish privacy protections, identify risks associated with data leakage, and share others' information only with consent and for legitimate purposes. When privacy is recognized as an ethical value, digital citizens can both protect themselves and avoid harming others.

Secondly, data security and privacy are crucial, considered a modern ethical requirement for digital citizens. Many deviant online behaviors stem from a disregard for privacy, such as posting images of others without permission, sharing personal information, and using sensitive data for teasing or harm. Essentially, this reflects a lack of respect for human beings in the modern world. Therefore, training should focus on equipping individuals with the capacity to manage their digital identities, establish privacy rights, identify risks associated with data exposure, and only share others' information with their consent and for legitimate purposes. When privacy is recognized as an ethical value, digital citizens can both protect themselves and avoid harming others.

Thirdly, it involves the ability to self-regulate behavior and build a digital demeanor, continuing Ho Chi Minh's thought on persistent training and self-cultivation in daily life. In the digital environment, digital demeanor is manifested in purposeful use of technology, time management, emotional control, and the ability to recognize deviant behaviors. Many online conflicts arise not from differences in opinion, but from a lack of self-restraint and ethical standards. Therefore, training digital citizens should emphasize such practices as engaging in issue-focused debate without personal attacks, avoiding inflammatory language, and knowing how to apologize and correct mistakes. These behaviors constitute manifestations of digital discipline and ethics, a form of self-governance that helps citizens control their behavior in an environment prone to extremism.

Thirdly, it involves the ability to self-regulate behavior and build a digital demeanor, continuing Ho Chi Minh's thought on persistent training and self-cultivation in daily life. In the digital environment, a digital demeanor is manifested in the ability to use technology purposefully, manage time, control emotions, and recognize deviant behaviors. Many online conflicts arise not from differences in opinion but from a lack of self-restraint and ethical standards. Therefore, cultivating digital citizens needs to emphasize issues such as: engaging in relevant discussions without personal attacks; avoiding inflammatory language; and knowing how to apologize and correct mistakes. These behaviors are manifestations of digital discipline and ethics, a form of self-management that helps citizens control their behavior in an environment prone to extremism.

Fourth, it is the capacity for social responsibility, applying the principle of "construction goes hand in hand with combating" in Ho Chi Minh's thought. Digital citizens are not only required to refrain from harmful actions, but should also be encouraged to engage in positive online behaviors, such as disseminating useful knowledge, sharing accurate information, participating in learning communities, providing support, and proactively reporting violations. Digital social responsibility also encompasses respect for the rule of law in cyberspace and an understanding that freedom of expression does not equate to insult or fabrication; technology does not suppress viewpoints but rather renders them more visible, as actions can be recorded in cyberspace. This is a crucial factor in forming proactive digital citizens who contribute to building a safe and healthy online environment, rather than merely acting as passive recipients of content.

Thus, the current development of digital citizenship, in the spirit of Ho Chi Minh's thought, should be understood as a process of building individuals in new conditions, starting

from ethical values, developing into core digital competencies, and ending with observable and evaluable digital behavioral norms. When ethics are properly placed, the ability to use technology will flourish in a humane direction; when the level of public awareness is raised, digital citizens will be able to resist fake news and manipulation; when digital discipline and conduct are formed, digital behavior will become civilized; and when digital social responsibility is encouraged, the online environment will become a space for sustainable development. This is the practical value of applying Ho Chi Minh's thought on the new socialist person to the development of digital citizenship in Vietnam.

Conclusion

By clarifying the meaning of the “new socialist person” in Ho Chi Minh's thought, it can be shown that this is not an empty slogan, but a carefully constructed personality model. In this model, morality plays a foundational role; the combination of action and self-discipline is a prerequisite for realizing values; and social responsibility is the basic orientation. Ho Chi Minh emphasized that morality is the foundation of revolutionaries, while advancing the values of “diligence, frugality, integrity, and righteousness” to combat individualism and social evils. Furthermore, Ho Chi Minh also pointed out that morality is not innate but needs to be cultivated through continuous training and considered education as a long-term strategy that determines the quality of social development.

In the current context, fostering digital citizens has become a key requirement in Vietnam's digital transformation process. Citizens are not only beneficiaries of digital government, the digital economy, and the digital social ecosystem, but also active participants in. This requires citizens to possess essential skills such as information and data literacy, online communication and collaboration skills, content creation skills, cybersecurity skills, and the capacity to adapt to online learning. Therefore, fostering digital citizenship is no longer merely a technical task, but a social responsibility, a strategy aimed at shaping individuals capable of living, working, and participating effectively in the digital environment.

However, the reality is that many current problems stem not only from a lack of technical skills, but also from a deficiency in digital ethics and cultural norms. For example, the decline in behavioral norms (verbal violence, aggression, and online harassment), the crisis of trust due to fake news and misinformation, violations of privacy and personal data, academic fraud, and harmful profiteering activities such as scams and forgery. Such phenomena underscore the urgent need to shift the focus from “developing hard skills” to “developing digital citizenship ethics,” because without an ethical foundation, digital skills may be abused, exacerbating personal harm and eroding social trust.

Therefore, cultivating digital citizens according to Ho Chi Minh's thought is of great significance. It can function as a guiding framework for ensuring humane and sustainable development, directing ethically grounded digital behavior, enhancing public awareness in the digital age through responsible verification and critical thinking, fostering self-discipline in cyberspace, helping individuals regulate their behavior and emotions in communication, and promoting social responsibility in the digital era with a constructive

and proactive spirit. In this way, fostering digital citizens according to Ho Chi Minh's thought constitutes a process of nurturing individuals who are both competent and virtuous in the current context, beginning with a system of values, developing these values into competencies, and consolidating them into observable and assessable behavioral norms, thereby laying a foundation for the development of socialist digital citizens.

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