



# Digital Justice Perception Survey

*August 2021*



## **Abstract**

The Digital Justice Perception Survey (DJPS) of the Philippine Digital Justice Initiative (PHDJI) is research whose aim is to gather the perception and gauge the level of literacy of Filipinos regarding data justice and other substantially related issues. With internet-connected citizens of Metro Manila participating in the survey, it was found that a significant portion of respondents is still unequipped on the concepts of digitalization and digital justice despite the stated confidence and familiarity on their part. Although some are knowledgeable on the basics, a huge portion is still either neutral or unaware of the topic of digital justice and the like. This research concludes that further educational campaigns (preferably specialized) and movements to educate and equip the public are very much needed, especially with the rapidity of digitalization intensified by the ongoing pandemic.

## **Introduction**

Digital justice, digitalization, automation, intelligencification, and other related concerns are topics that are rarely heard of in daily conversations of Filipinos despite the Philippines being the World's Social Media capital—with an estimated 83 million Filipinos connecting to social media at the end of 2021 and an average of 4 hours of social media consumption daily (Statista, 2021). Filipino netizens--and especially those who had not yet joined the digital world and experienced the ongoing digitalization--would be in peril if they would be involved if they are not equipped with the basic knowledge and literacy in using and navigating the internet. In addition, although a massive educational campaign would be appropriate to address the problem of lack of preparedness, having an overall measurement on the level and manner of perception and reception of masses in the concepts related to digitalization and digital justice is necessary to serve as a jumpstarting area for further research and projects. Hence, the PDJI initiated the Digital Justice Perception Survey (DJPS) project.

With the netizens of Metro Manila as the target population, the DJPS aims to gather and synthesize the opinions and perception of the public on the topics related to digital justice in the context of ongoing digitalization and pandemic in the Philippines.

## **Methodology**

In conducting this study, the researchers initially planned to use a combination of convenience and stratified sampling methods. By doing so, the researchers can properly address the limitations in resources while still maintaining the level of representativeness of the sample population. However, due to the worsening cases of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, the limitations in conducting personal and face-to-face interactions with people became more challenging for the researchers. Thus, the researchers decided to conduct the gathering of information solely through online means to reduce health risks.

The survey was planned to be conducted from January 2021 to March 2021. However, due to the lack of respondents, the survey was extended until the end of April 2021.

Recognizing the fact that the topic of digital justice is new and may be perceived by the participants as indirectly related or unrelated at all to their endeavors or major socio-economic plights, thus lessening the interest and enthusiasm in answering the survey, the researchers provided cash incentives to the respondents, amounting to 50 pesos. Furthermore, given that the survey contains 54 questions, the monetary incentive increases the probability that the respondents will answer the questions with enthusiasm and greater attention.

The target sample population of 270 people with internet connection in Metro Manila were then stratified by a specific age range, namely: (1) 13-17; (2) 18-24; (3) 25-34; (4) 35-44; (5) 45-54; (6) 55-64; and (7) 65 and up. This stratification is based on the 2020 Facebook Audience Profile (Kemp, 2020). In addition, the placed limitations on the number of respondents on each stratum are in proportion to the percentage they represent on the entirety, resulting in this division of respondents:

Age Range	% of Representation	Equivalent No. of Respondents	Respondents Gathered
13-17	9.9%	27	19
18-24	32%	87	79
25-34	30.3%	82	76
35-44	14.1%	38	22
45-54	7.1%	19	21
55-64	3.7%	10	12
65+	2.4%	7	3
Total		270	230

As can be observed in the chart above, the survey was only able to gather a total of 233 respondents, thus affecting the validity of data and possible input of some age groups.

## Survey Results

### o Divisions of Questions Explanation

In terms of the structure and flow of the survey, the researchers divided it into seven sections, of which the five contain the key sections where the researchers ask questions aiming to grasp the perception of respondents on the topics related to digital justice. The first section attempts to measure the level of knowledge and literacy of participants in navigating the internet and social media, stance on the importance of privacy and ownership, and awareness on the concept of Digital Justice; the second is about the Philippine ICT Infrastructure; the third is about the data privacy and security in different internet platforms; the fourth revolves around the digitization of industries; while the fifth and last section is about the Philippine e-governance. Collectively, the questions aimed to collect their insights and stands on the aforementioned topics and finally corroborate the answers with the general perception on their digital literacy.

### o Results per Section

#### Section 2

In terms of gauging the level of knowledge, stand, and awareness on the general topics related to digital justice, responses from participants have shown commonality in the majority of the questions. 80% of participants agreed that people should have ownership and the sole right on the “things that they produce”, which is an essential concept in digital justice. The majority of the participants considered their level of literacy to be very good or good in terms of browsing the internet (86%) and using

social media platforms (81%). The dominant age group who rated “fair enough” on the same question belonged to AG 45-54, (19% and 23.81%, respectively).

With regards to the question of familiarity on the concepts of Digital Justice (Chart 1), the majority of the participants (45.5%) rated good and followed by neutral (36.1%), which is dominantly comprised by the AG 55-64 (58.8%) and 18-24 (41%). The answers for this question are vital as this would serve as the benchmark for correlation to other succeeding subtopics to measure the level of digital literacy of participants. Respondents are divided on the question of whether the internet has made a positive impact on the lives of Filipino people, as 65.5% of the respondents agree with this while the 28% are neutral. Participants answered differently when asked the same question on the effects of social media: 46.6% agreed, while 40.1% answered neutral (40% from AG 18-24, 27.7% from AG 25-34, and 13.8% from AG 35-44).

### Section 3

The means of the respondents in connecting to the internet is diverse of which some are connecting using the outdated options. 29% and 25% are connecting using fixed broadband connection and free data connection, a small portion of respondents admit that they are still using public WIFI, PisoNet, and Internet Café (4%, 2%, and 3%, respectively). With regards to the reception and experience of the public with the current state of ICT infrastructure in the Philippines, the majority of the respondents are not satisfied. 30% of the respondents answered that they get an excellent return service while the other 28% disagree. The dissatisfaction with the quality of internet service was stressed even more with 45% of the respondents rating the quality and speed of the internet as “not very good”.

Despite the dissatisfaction of the respondents on the quality of ICT infrastructure in the Philippines, a large portion of the respondents are

open to the possible benefits of changing to digital processes in different daily activities. For instance, 41% are willing to use public WIFI in doing simple online activities such as browsing the internet and social media while 27.3% are neutral and 27.7% are not willing. On a similar note, 58% of respondents are even willing to switch to cashless transactions due to COVID-19 if possible. Respondents stated that they are in favor of having a National Data Commons in the Philippines.

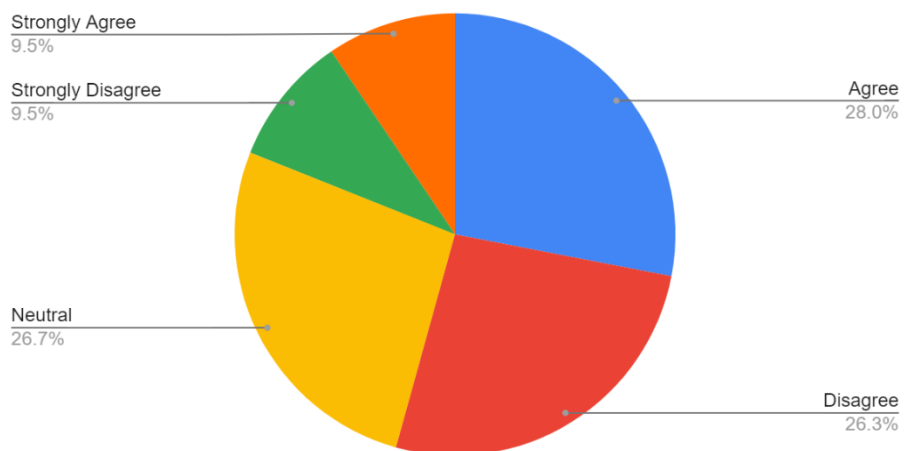
#### Section 4

The fourth section serves as the core part of the research, as the questions in this area focus on how the respondents perceive the key issues on data privacy, security, and ownership in using social media and other internet platforms.

The importance of privacy is an essential element in digital justice, and when asked about this topic, the majority of the respondents that privacy and data privacy is important to them (91% and 89%, respectively). Opinions are greatly divided in terms of confidence on how social media secure their data: 37.5% agreed, 35.8% disagreed, and 26.7% neutral (see Chart 1).

Chart 1

Position on the statement "I am confident that mydata is safe in the social media network..."



Although the majority of the respondents said that their familiarity with social media is either good or very good, the opinion is divided with regards to the confidence of their data and information on these platforms: 26% agreed, 28% are neutral, 25% disagreed, 9.8% strongly disagreed, 8.7% strongly agreed on this statement. 87.1% of respondents are aware that the social media algorithm affects their user experience in general. More than 60% of respondents agreed and are aware that the content they see on their social media has a direct influence on their hobbies, interest, and politics. Interestingly, the “neutral” answers doubled when respondents were asked the same question on politics, from 12% to hobbies and interests to 24.6% (see Chart 2 and Chart 3). Given that most of the respondents are aware of the impact of social media algorithms, the majority of the respondents disagree or are neutral (28.8% and 19.4%, respectively) when asked if they are fine with their social media application showing ads that they have just randomly talked about.

Chart 2

Position on the statement “It is okay for me that my social media suggest content such a...

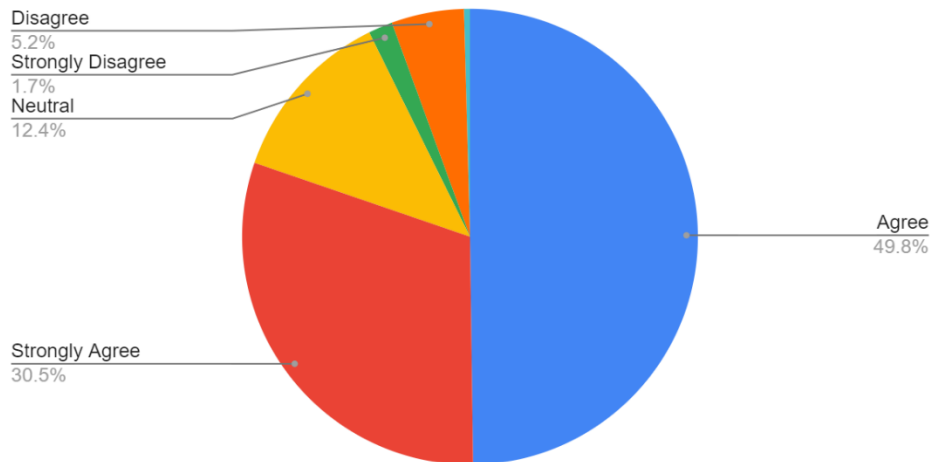
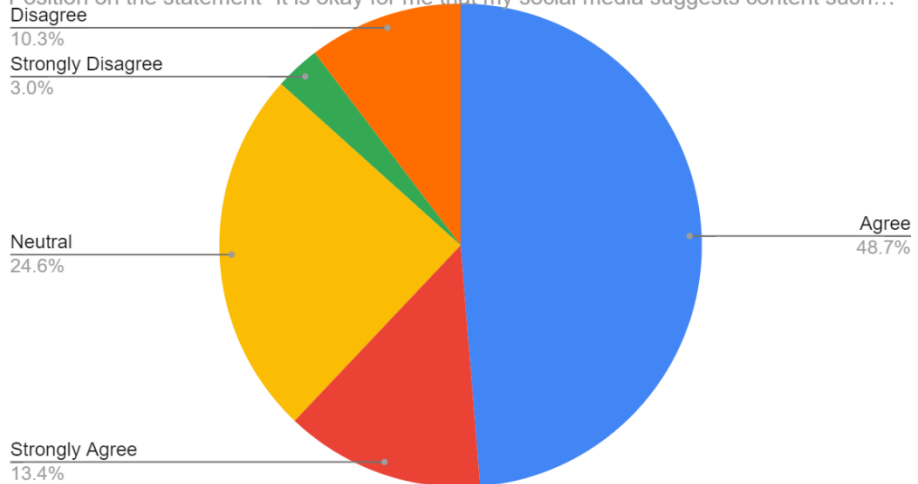




Chart 3

Position on the statement "It is okay for me that my social media suggests content such...



It is not surprising that 81.1% of the participants stated that social media should have a clearer way to explain how the data of users are collected and should introduce a better feature that can allow users what type of data that the social media can have or cannot have access on their account/s or device/s. 80% of respondents also agreed that social media pages should compensate their users because of the benefits from the data that the latter produces.

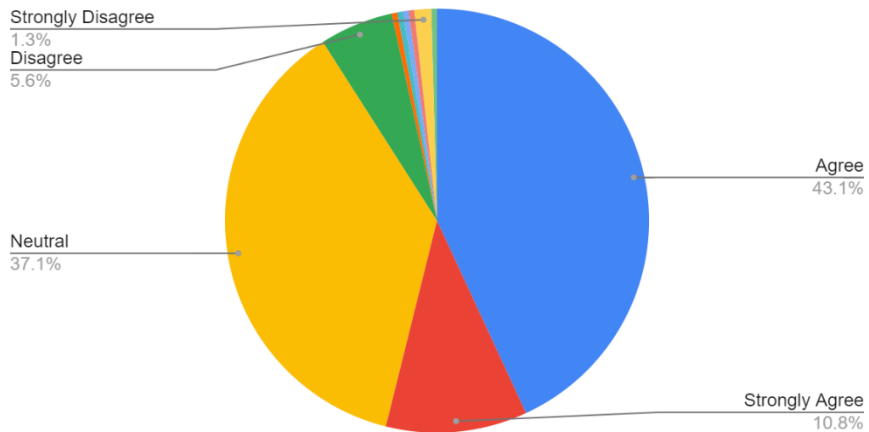
## Section 5

The fifth section focuses on the opinions and positions of respondents on the topics of automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and their relation with works and industries. 76.3% of respondents are aware of the concept of automation, while 68.1% know the positive effects of automation. Moreover, 66.3% of the participants are aware of the disruptive effects of automation in industries. Despite knowing the positive and possible disruptive effects of automation, a significant portion of 37.1% of respondents are neutral when asked about their position on automation in industries, whereas 53.9% of the respondents agree (see

Chart 4).

Chart 4

Position on the statement "I am in favor of automation in different industries."



86.2% of respondents agree that government and businesses should assist the employees that can be potentially affected by disruption from automation. Interestingly, the survey participants are also divided on their answers regarding their replaceability as employees by AI if a job with a higher wage would be offered for them: 39.9% agreed (41% are from AG 18-24 and 23% are from AG 25-34), 30%, are neutral, 29.4% disagreed.

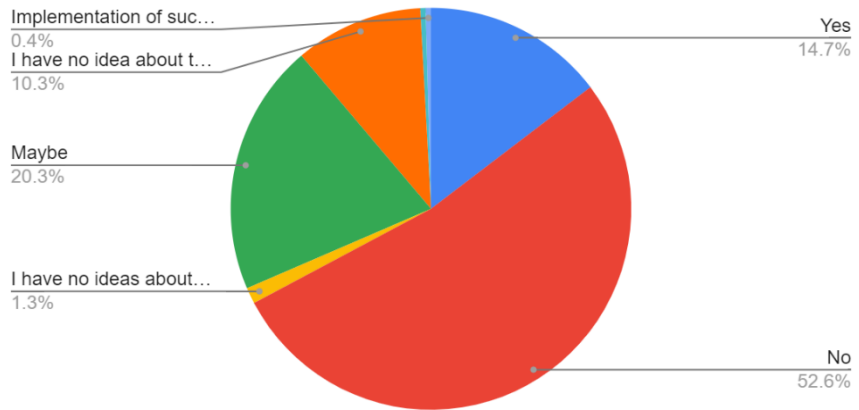
#### Section 6:

This section revolves around the vital role of government in facilitating the digitalization of the Philippines that is in line with the principles of data justice with a focus on e-government services. When asked about the experience in using government websites, a huge portion of responses have given neutral (37%) and bad (24%) as their rating. Meanwhile, the number of respondents who rated their experience as good comprise only 23%.

Meanwhile, 69.8% of participants are aware of the existing laws in the Philippines covering the areas of data privacy and security. However, 52.6% stated that the current laws are not sufficient in ensuring the privacy and security of citizens online; 14.7% of the respondents agree that the existing laws suffice while 20.3% are neutral.

Chart 5

Position on the sufficiency of existing data privacy and security of the government



## Analysis and Conclusion

Based on the survey results, a significant portion of the participants has stated that privacy and data privacy is important. In addition, most of the participants have professed of having a high level of literacy in browsing and using the internet and social media--87% of the participants even stated having awareness of the functionality of social media algorithms.

The statement of literacy from participants conflicts with the responses of participants in the succeeding sections. This is especially observable in the predominant acceptance that social media influence their lifestyle—specifically on hobbies and interests—and politics. Participants have no issues with regards to their social media showing targeted from the things that they have recently searched or talked about.

Nevertheless, the doubled neutral response on the question of the effects of social media on their politics is notable, demonstrating how the participants put a different level of value on this aspect of their lifestyle. Participants agree as well that social media should have a better way of explaining their data usage policies.

On a positive note, participants have demonstrated that they are in favor of pushing businesses and respective government agencies to foster possibilities that can ensure favorable digital ecosystems and possibilities for important sectors that are and/or will be affected critically by digitalization. This collective opinion was evident in the responses of participants on the topic of automation in industries.

In addition, despite the neutrality of some participants, the starkly bigger portions have expressed willingness in enjoying the beneficial effects of digitalization. This is apparent in the topic of using digital banking, public WIFI, automation, and establishing Data Commons. That is if the usual worries of the public such as the lack of data security, digital safety, and opportunities to join online banking will be addressed either by the government or other responsible agencies.

The dissonance on the stated digital literacy of participants and the complaisance and neutrality on the societal and personal effects (politics and interests) of social media

and the internet can be perceived as one thing. This is due to the lack of awareness of the specificities of social media and the possible effects of long-term data exposure from and usage of private entities. Participants are not uninformed, as there is a unison on expressing that social media companies should have an easy-to-read and user-friendly EULA for users from different spectrums to be able to comprehend and understand it. Even so, a considerable number of participants know what are the fundamental elements to maximize and benefit from the digital infrastructure, automation, and e-government services

The aforementioned findings prove that more educational campaign, projects, and movements that can serve as guidance for the literacy of people are what is needed, as the knowledge of the public on things digital are present albeit fragmented. Also, considering that the sample population came from National Capital Region which currently has the highest internet penetration in any region in the Philippines (65%), the need for a specialized or more specific educational campaign in other regions—even in areas where digitalization is only at its infancy stage—is critical to better provide necessary tools for the people that will soon be more involved with the digital world and other related processes (Statista, 2021).

This is especially needed due to the pandemic wherein digitalization has been quickly jumpstarted and is now incorporated in most of the services in the public and private sector, such as contact tracing using QR codes. With the current speed of digitalization, how quickly it affects the society and the lives of the people, and rapidly produces new phenomena and challenges wherein it is getting harder and harder to keep up, a quick and pro-active and hybrid educational campaign will be the most effective.

## **Recommendations**

Conducting a study that revolves around a topic not yet fully explored and during a challenging global pandemic comes with its unique challenges for the project, thus rendering the research to adjust on several aspects. The researchers believe that the future studies intending to replicate or build upon the research can utilize the following

recommendations to further widen the topic that is adjusted for the needs of the Filipino society sporadically changing due to digitalization.

The first would be on ascertaining the acquisition of the set number of respondents. The researchers faced challenges in obtaining the sample population for Metro Manila, as the pandemic and as the unforeseen and intermittent changing government rules and restrictions left the researchers to survey online format only, which was in contrast to the plan of doing a hybrid type by distributing QR Codes of the survey to the public. With regards to the minute detail of the survey, condensing the number and types of choices could have been done in another similar type of research. The researchers suggest that a more pandemic-oriented and hybrid format of survey distribution is would be viable to cover a more dynamic sample population and response.

The second would be the starting of more specialized and topic-focused surveys or studies on digitalization in the Philippines that are in line with the topic of digital justice. As this study focused merely aimed to gather the general perception of the Metro Manila public on digitalization and digital justice, there were limitations in gathering and correlating interesting data. This would not only apply to NCR. but is also encouraged to be done in other areas of the Philippines, especially the cities that are only developing in digital infrastructure and space. The exploration of the topic on digital literacy, e-government experiences, digital banking, the interpersonal and societal effects of social media algorithms, among others, are some of the potential topics that can be explored.

The last recommendation would be the benchmarking of other variables in conducting and analyzing survey data. One specific suggestion would be the correlation of the socio-economic status of participants with their experience in digitalization and perception of digital justice.

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