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The impact of the city's digitalization on people's life and its quality in Moscow and St.Petersburg

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Introduction & problem statement

The digitalization of the cities has become a controversial topic these days. City's population dramatically increases, and metropolises provide good facilities such as job opportunities, better healthcare, good accommodation, and higher salaries. This lifestyle significantly differs from the suburban areas. Furthermore, cities are adapting technical inventions to enhance the quality of city dwellers' life: a variety of devices and gadget facilities such as innovative screens at bus stations, digital ads, and driverless buses and trains . Also, there are ID systems in metros and electronic delivery-robots that make life in cities more digitized and modernized, providing people with unique experiences [1].

However, these adjustments in cities can affect a dweller's life differently. Some people consider these innovations appropriate and suitable, others may experience detrimental effects in regard to these advancements and changes [2]. From this point of view, I would like to explore the impact of the city's digitalization on people's life and its quality in Moscow and St.Petersburg, as there is a relative absence of empirical investigation on this topic and the digitalization is comparatively latter-day concept, and its practices are still in the process of implementation. Henceforth, it is ponderable to take into account the advantages and disadvantages of a digitized city, shedding light on the improvements in transportation systems, cultural sphere, and renewed public services (such as "МФЦ", "Госуслуги", etc.).

Literature review & theoretical framework

Analyzing the processes of city development and urbanization, it is crucial to identify the definition of the smart city and its practices, related to the digitization processes within megapolises. Thus, to introduce smart city conception, recreation of the urban territory from scratch with the technological requirements and innovations; retrofitting of existing infrastructures and systems in given district with the advanced technologies which simplify life and make it more technologically-savvy; creation of electronic platforms for bureaucratic organization in case of life simplification and making dwellers life less time-consuming in the field of red tape processes - these points worth paying attention to [3]. Furthermore, implementing concept of smart city in real-life conditions, authorities should bring to light dimensions, related to the modification and development of cities: governance and service - the improvement of bureaucratic organizations, in terms of the management systems and its optimization; integration of ICT infrastructure - development of neighborhoods with the technological innovations related to transport systems, reconstruction of the city with the latest trends; sustainability and social capital - it is connected with the ecological issues and the communities within cities [4]. All of these tools should lead to the core principles of the smart cities - workability, livability and sustainability - which describe dwellers' routine in these innovative cities [5].

Methodology

In this study a qualitative research method is applied, because it is important to evaluate people's opinions . To be more precise, semi-structured in-depth online interviews are presumed to be used as it assists to develop conversation in a particular way: interviewers may ask for details and peculiarities to obtain insights and gather appropriate information related to the experience of digitalization practices in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Preliminary topics of the interview will be related to the fields of improvements in transportation systems (improvements of bus and metro stations with electronic tabloids, biometric systems, electronic card payment systems, etc.) and public services (modernization of the governance services for medicine, civil processes, post offices, entrepreneurship, taxation, etc.), digitalization of the market (self-service cash desks, delivery services, etc.). These digitization practices will be estimated and distinguished in accordance with topics. Sampling strategy in this study is a combination of purposive and snowball samplings, firstly interviewing people who share required characteristics from the interviewer point of view, and then asking respondents to recruit informants with the same distinctive features. In this study people from Moscow and St.Petersburg in age-cohort from 30 to 50 years old will be interviewed, as they could experience the transition to the smart cities and could be engaged in different spheres of public life wisely. Total number of interviews is 40-50 interviews from both cities - this number is applied to estimate more dwellers in various ages and get more insights (or maybe theoretical saturation will be achieved).

Limitations

This study may face potential problems and pitfalls with the respondent recruitment criteria in accordance with the snowball part, as initial subjects of interviews may recruit "wrong" subjects for interviews. What is more, there are problems conducting online interviews due to the bad Internet connection or limits of time people may contribute to the interview. Furthermore, the amount of interviews is quite tremendous and it may be relatively time-consuming for one interviewer.

Conclusion

Smart cities become more popular, providing new challenges for governments and city dwellers. This study contributes to the comprehension of the smart city influence on dwellers life.

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