The Mirage of Digital Communication and the Danger Brought by the Explosion of Digital Technology

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Abstract: The paper presents aspects of the significant impact that digital communication has on society, and the advantages, such as quick access to information, global connectivity, and the ability to interact with people around the world. Nevertheless, with the explosion of digital technology, certain dangers and challenges have also arisen. One of the main dangers of digital communication is the lack of privacy and data security; the spread of misinformation and fake news can have severe consequences for society, from influencing public opinion to affecting democracy and political stability. Also, excessive reliance on digital technology can lead to social isolation and diminished interpersonal communication skills. It is essential to be aware of these risks and take steps to minimize them.

Keywords: digital communication; technology; misinformation; impact

1. Introduction

Digital communication refers to exchanging information and messages through digital and Internet technologies. Digital communication[2] is a field of information science regarding using all digital media: web, social media, or mobile devices, for example. These media are used to disseminate, share, and create information.

Digital communication has become an essential aspect of everyday life in the modern world, affecting how people interact, work, and play. This encompasses various methods and technologies such as instant messaging, Email (electronic mail), social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, video calling

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[2] https://ro.frwiki.wiki/wiki/Communication_numérique.

and online conferencing, blogs and forums, collaboration applications, e-commerce, virtual reality, and augmentation.

Although digital communication brings many benefits, such as quick access to information and connecting with people worldwide, it is essential to be aware of security and privacy issues to protect personal information and prevent potential problems related to the inappropriate or abusive use of technology.

The mirage of digital communication in social media refers to the shiny and attractive appearance of social interactions on social media platforms, which can hide negative or dangerous aspects. Social media offers tremendous opportunities to connect people, share experiences, and communicate with diverse communities worldwide. However, there are aspects of digital communication in social media that can be misleading and have negative consequences:

Reality filtering and hiding in social media refers to users presenting only the favorable aspects of their lives on social media platforms while hiding or minimizing the negative or less attractive elements. This practice can create a distorted picture of reality and make an unrealistic impression of a person's life or society. This phenomenon manifests in social media by selecting positive content, retouching and editing images, omitting negative aspects, or presenting an ideal life image. Filtering and hiding reality in social media can adversely affect users' mental health. When people compare themselves to the idealized images on social media platforms, they may develop feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness, or sadness. It is important to remember that what we see on social media does not always reflect the whole reality of someone's life and to be aware of this distortion. At the same time, let's be open and promote honest and authentic discussions on social media to build more genuine connections and support a healthy and balanced online environment.

Increased anxiety and social comparison in social media are two interrelated issues that can negatively affect users' mental health. Thus, on social media, people compare their lives, appearance, achievements, and emotional state with other users. This social comparison can lead to feelings of inadequacy or worthlessness, as users may feel that they do not measure up as well as others regarding success, beauty, or happiness.

Also, the impression of perfection can create the belief that everyone else has perfect lives, leading to an unrealistic comparison to one's own experiences and challenges.

People can feel pressure to present themselves in a certain way and to be accepted by others. Fear of rejection or criticism can generate social anxiety and cause users to modify their behavior or withdraw from social interactions.

Dependence on online validation can negatively affect self-esteem and self-confidence, as they only feel valued when they receive positive feedback online, and excessive consumption of negative news or challenging content on social media can contribute to increased anxiety and stress, emotionally affecting users and their perception of the world.

Information manipulation on social media refers to deliberately spreading false information, misinformation, or fabricated news to influence public opinion, create confusion, or obtain a personal, political, or economic advantage. This manipulation can be carried out by individuals, organizations, or even governments and can significantly impact society and democratic processes. Manipulation of information on social media can affect public trust in media and online news. To counter these effects, users should be aware and critical in evaluating the content they encounter on social media. Checking the sources and authenticity of information is essential before sharing it or making decisions based on it. In collaboration with users and communities, social media platforms strive to identify and remove manipulative content and misinformation to ensure a safer and more informative online environment.

Security and privacy issues are significant concerns in using social media and other digital platforms. Digital communication on social media risks exposing personal data, and more excellent care is needed to protect personal information and avoid threats to online security. Here are some of these issues:

Unauthorized access to accounts. One of the most common security problems is unauthorized access to user accounts. This can happen by guessing weak passwords, phishing attacks, or exploiting other platform vulnerabilities.

Data security breaches. Social media platforms contain significant personal user data, such as identifying information, photos, and messages. Data security breaches can lead to exposure and unauthorized access to this sensitive information.

Harassment and cyberbullying. Social media can facilitate harassment and cyberbullying behaviors, which seriously affect the safety and privacy of users. These actions can cause emotional damage and have negative mental health consequences.

Cyber-attacks. Social media platforms can be targets for various types of cyber-attacks, such as DDoS attacks (distributed denial of service attacks), malware, or ransomware, which can affect the functionality of the platforms and compromise user data.

Digital footprints and data management. The information you post and your actions on social media can leave permanent digital traces that can be used for unwanted purposes or harm your reputation and privacy.

Surveillance and data collection. Social media platforms can collect significant data about users, their online behavior, and their preferences. This data may be used for commercial or marketing purposes or shared with third parties without users' consent.

To protect themselves from security and privacy issues on social media, users should consider the following measures[1]:

☐ Use strong and unique passwords for social media accounts and enable two-step authentication if available.

☐ Be aware of possible phishing attacks or suspicious messages, and never give out personal or authentication information through unsolicited links or unknown emails.

☐ Review and adjust your account privacy settings to control who can see and access your content.

☐ Do not share sensitive or confidential personal information on social media platforms, and be careful about the content you post.

☐ Use a secure internet connection, especially when accessing social media accounts from mobile devices or public networks.

☐ Be cautious about accepting friendships or connections with strangers, and do not provide personal information in private conversations with them.

☐ It is essential to be aware of the risks associated with using social media and take steps to protect our online security and privacy.

☐ It is essential to be aware of these aspects of digital communication in social media and use social media platforms responsibly. Limiting the time spent on social media

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[1] https://www.ecb.md/upload/online_banking_files/files/9rn1r4tscu.pdf.

and understanding that what we see may only be a small part of reality can contribute to a healthier and more balanced online digital communication experience.

Conclusions

Digital communication brings several significant advantages that have transformed how people interact and connect in the digital age, such as global accessibility, real-time speed, low costs, diversity of communication media, flexibility and convenience, information sharing, and more.

Digital communication has had a significant impact on all aspects of our lives, bringing with it remarkable opportunities and advantages. However, it is essential to be aware of the potential challenges and risks associated with the use of digital technology and to approach online communication with responsibility and care.

Along with its advantages, digital communication also comes with some disadvantages and challenges, some of which are very important and produce adverse effects.

Digital communication, primarily written messages, does not convey all aspects of non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language, leading to misinterpretations and less effective communication. Excessive use of digital communication can lead to an addiction to technology, negatively affecting users' social life, productivity, and mental health.

Through social media and other digital platforms, people can be oversaturated with information and content online, which can cause stress, anxiety, and digital fatigue, with digital communication vulnerable to cyber-attacks, hacking, and exposure of personal data, which can put users' privacy and safety at risk.

Also, social media and other digital platforms can quickly spread fake news and misinformation, leading to confusion and a distorted perception of reality.

Digital communication can have a negative impact on interpersonal relationships, reducing intimacy and authentic human connection, especially when communication is done exclusively through screens.

Another essential aspect is related to Cyberbullying and online harassment. Social media can be a breeding ground for bullying and cyberbullying behaviors, which can severely affect the mental health of victims. It is essential to be aware of these disadvantages of digital communication and adopt a healthy balance in the use of

technology. By being aware of the impact of these aspects, we can approach digital communication with responsibility and discernment to get the best results from our online interactions.

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